

NAVY NEWS

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FIRE FOR EFFECT

**RN DELIVERS
TRIPLE BLOW
TO GADDAFI**

COUGAR IN TOWN

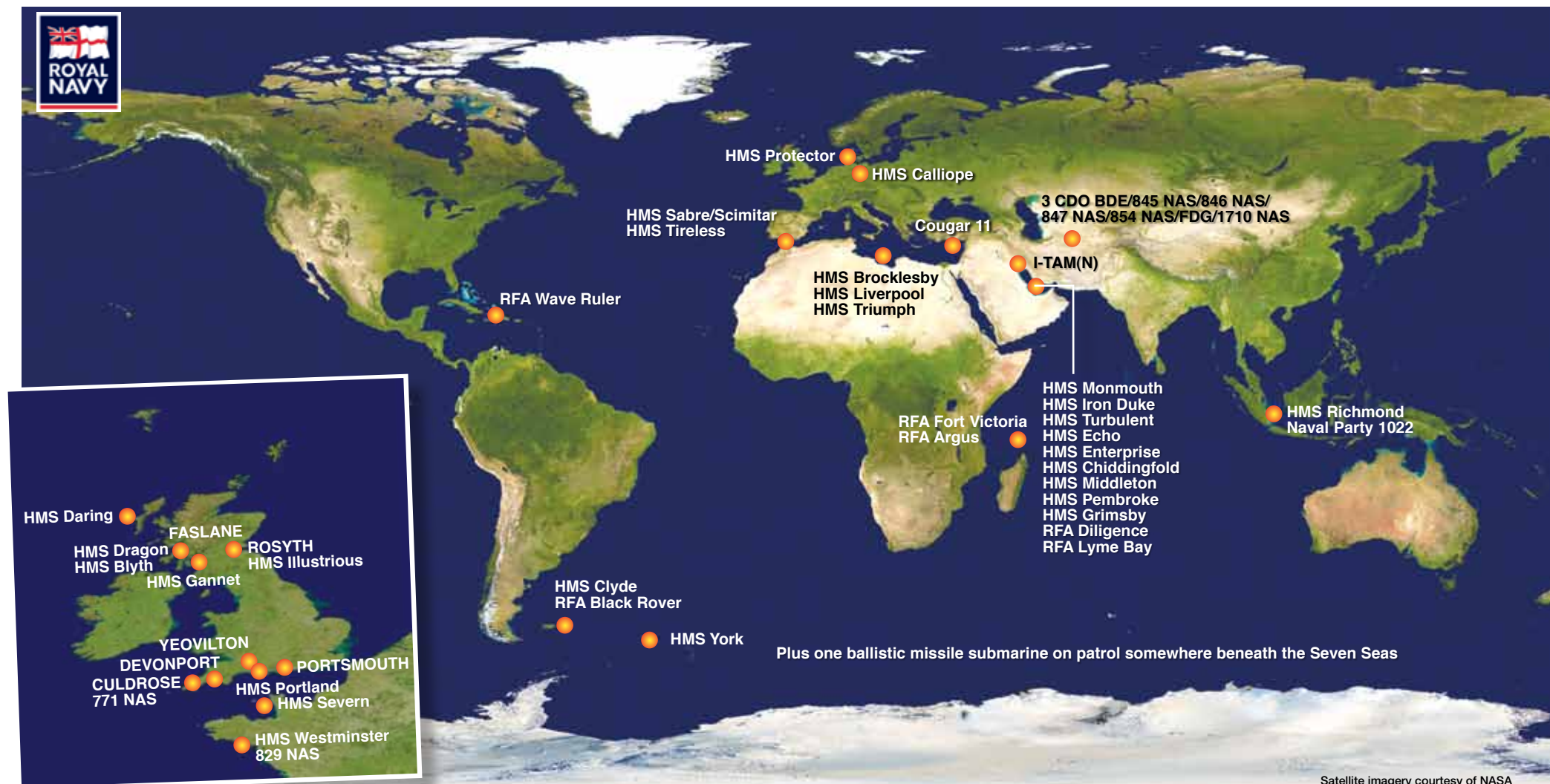
**TASK GROUP
ARRIVES IN
CYPRUS**

BACK IN BLACK

HMS Monmouth's winchman, AET Sam Ashman, is lowered from the ship's Lynx – call sign Black Knight – as the frigate begins dealing with the scourge of piracy in the Indian Ocean. **See page 8 for details.**

Picture: LA(Phot) Stu Hill, FRPU North





Fleet Focus

WE HAVE bangs for your buck aplenty this month.

Cruise missiles, main guns, mine disposal devices – all fired in anger – plus Sea Viper completing its second successful test firing.

To Libya first and proof that the men and women of the Royal Navy are in harm's way. Pro-Government forces opened fire on **HMS Liverpool** – which answered with her 4.5in gun – and laid mines off Misrata, one of which was blown up by **HMS Brocklesby**. From a rather safer position beneath the Mediterranean, **HMS Triumph** – on her second deployment in a matter of weeks – fired missiles at targets around Tripoli (see page 4).

As Triumph returned to the Med to lob more Tomahawks at Col Gaddafi's military apparatus, her sister **HMS Tireless** was heading in the opposite direction, bringing to an end the longest submarine deployment in a decade (see right and pages 14-15).

Also on the Silent Service front, the first £3bn has been set aside for the replacement strategic deterrent (see opposite).

Back in the world of skimmers, **HMS Daring** fired her Sea Viper main armament for the first time (see opposite) while her sister **Dragon** helped prevent a yacht from being dashed on rocks (also see opposite) as she carried out sea trials.

Type 45 No.3, **HMS Diamond**, was commissioned on a suitably sparkling spring day in Portsmouth (see page 6), while at the other end of the Fleet's age range, Britain's oldest active warship, **HMS Illustrious**, is about to put to sea after a £40m refit lasting almost 18 months (see page 6).

HMS Richmond has ended her piratical patrol and headed to Singapore (see page 6), where her needs are being catered for by **Naval Party 1022** (see page 10).

Picking up where Richmond left off is **HMS Monmouth** which has begun her first sweep of the Indian Ocean (see page 8).

A little further north **HMS Iron Duke** has been exercising with **HMS Grimsby** after enjoying a stand-down in Dubai (see page 8).

Grimsby's been busy recently: she also took part in a major US-UK-Pakistani exercise with **HMS Pembroke** and **Chiddingfold** (see page 13).

The Cheery Chid and Grimsby are both about to begin the long journey home to be replaced in Bahrain by **HMS Quorn** and **Ramsey** respectively (see page 5).

One key Gulf mission is now over with the formal ending of Operation Telic. The last RN presence, the **ITAM(N)** training team in Umm Qasr, officially completed their mission on May 22 (see page 5).

Another mission over is that by **847 NAS**, whose personnel and Lynx returned to Yeovilton after providing support for ground troops in Afghanistan (see page 9)...

...which is where **30 Commando Group** are getting down to a difficult mission of gathering intelligence and information to assist the peacekeeping work of **3 Commando Brigade** (see page 9) – work which, sadly, has claimed its first victim on this latest tour of duty for the green berets in Helmand (see page 4).

Also getting down to business right now is the **Cougar 11** task force, which has been honing its combined FAA-RN-RM-Army Air Corps skills in and around Cyprus, including the first live firings from Apache gunships at sea (see the centre pages).

Closer to home, **HMS Westminster** has been working off the French coast on an anti-submarine exercise (see page 5), while HM Ships **Cornwall** and **Gloucester** have made their very final entries to their home ports (Devonport and Portsmouth respectively – see pages 7 and 3).

And finally... for the inaugural time ice patrol ship **HMS Protector** appears on our map. The stop-gap for HMS Endurance has completed a swift refit in Denmark and entered Portsmouth for the first time (see opposite).



Tireless by name – and nature

THIS is something the men of **HMS Tireless** have not seen in ten months: Plymouth Hoe – and home.

After the longest submarine deployment in ten years – 307 days away from home – the hunter-killer sailed back into Devonport and the warmest of welcomes from around 150 loved ones.

Tireless (pictured here by LA(Phot) Joel Rouse, FRPU West) sailed on July 9 last year, since when she has spent 253 days at sea, mostly carrying out counter-piracy/terrorism/smuggling operations east of Suez – the first time the submarine has passed through the legendary canal.

The nature of much of her work meant her 130-strong crew had no contact with families at home and operated in punishing conditions.

In addition to her intelligence gathering missions, the Trafalgar-class submarine worked with other Allied naval forces in the Indian Ocean.

The boat provided protection for France's flagship Charles de Gaulle and her battle group as the carrier launched jets for operations over Afghanistan.

It's the first time a British submarine has been asked to perform the role following last year's Anglo-French defence agreement signed by Prime Minister David Cameron and his French counterpart Nicholas Sarkozy.

Tireless also took part in a major international exercise in the Gulf of Oman with the French, Americans and Australians as the ships and *Tireless* played 'cat and mouse'.

East of Suez, temperatures in the engine room rarely dropped below 48°C and on occasions touched 60°C during patrols which lasted up to six weeks at a time.

The submarine enjoyed eight visits to Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates – where she spent Christmas – plus Goa in India and Souda Bay in Crete.

During the lengthy deployment, the boat celebrated her 25th birthday – with a cake, of course – and clocked up more than 35,000 miles, while her crew have devoured 33,160 sausages, 16,800 eggs, 54,000 rashers of bacon and 16 tonnes of spuds, while *Tireless*' specialist plants produced enough fresh water to make 3.3 million cups of tea.

"At over ten months this has been the longest submarine deployment in recent history – and

one of which the ship's company are justifiably proud," said *Tireless*' Commanding Officer Cdr Jason Clay.

"In the current climate, the Royal Navy is working harder than ever and *HMS Tireless* is no exception.

"We're absolutely delighted to see so many family and friends making the trip to Devonport to welcome us back – without their support, our job would be much more difficult.

"Despite the time spent away, it was business as usual the next day to get the boat ready for operations in the autumn."

Among the numerous reunions on the Devonport jetty was 26-year-old AB Marc Robson and his fiancée Carly Spencer, 23; the couple were due to tie the knot just a fortnight after the boat's return.

"It's so good to see Carly again. I have missed her. I was very upset when we were all told the boat was due to be delayed coming back by two months," said Marc.

"But that makes it even better to see her again. It was also touch and go whether I would be back in time to help prepare for the wedding, but luckily I got back in time."

Life aboard *Tireless*, pages 14-15



Enter the Dragon – just in time

HMS Dragon saved the crew of a yacht which was threatened with being dashed against rocks on the Mull of Kintyre.

The Sceptre and her five-strong crew flashed an SOS as she drifted helplessly in strong rip tides and rough conditions towards the shore.

The mayday was picked up by the £1bn destroyer during her second period of sea trials off the west coast of Scotland.

The Type 45 was fortunately just six miles away from the yacht at the time – and just 25 minutes after picking up the distress call, Dragon was able to put her sea boat in the water.

Five minutes later and the boat had a tow line across to the yacht. For the next 16 minutes it struggled amid high waves and a strong tidal race to haul the Sceptre until the tow parted.

A second line was thrown across as the RIB fought the elements to save the yacht from being smashed until the Campbeltown lifeboat arrived on the scene to take Sceptre to safety in the small fishing port.

Dragon has a mixed RN/BAE Systems crew aboard as she undergoes her extensive trials – and the same counted for her sea boat, driven by AB Briggs with BAE's Willy Brownless and Robert Allen who were involved in the tow operation.

“Conditions were getting worse very quickly,” said AB Briggs. “I reckon the yacht only had 15 minutes before ending up on the rocks, so it was really important to get there quickly.

“I didn't really think of the danger, we just got on with the job. The yacht's crew looked really happy to see us.”

Mr Brownless added: “We were really happy to help out – the boat was a beautiful classic with a wooden hull and it would have been a shame to lose her.”

Once Dragon's trials are finished, she'll return to Scotstoun for final fitting out before sailing for Portsmouth in August.

Commitment to Trident replacement

THREE billion pounds has been committed to the Navy's – and the nation's – ultimate weapon as the first steps are taken to replace Britain's nuclear deterrent.

Early design work will now begin on the successors to the existing quartet of Vanguard-class submarines which will provide the UK's round-the-clock nuclear deterrent beyond 2060.

Vanguard, Vengeance, Victorious and Vigilant will reach the end of their working lives by the late 2020s after more than 30 years' service.

Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox told MPs that in the current global climate, Britain should remain committed to the ultimate weapon of peacekeeping.

“The continuous at sea deterrent is the ultimate guarantee of our national security and for the past 42 years the Royal Navy has operated continuous patrols to ensure just that,” he added.

“We do not know how the international environment will change over the next 50 years and we cannot dismiss the possibility that a direct nuclear threat to the UK might emerge. It is simply not the right time to unilaterally give this capability up.”

The £3bn allocated for the new boats – which will begin entering service in 2028 – will be spent on their design, including their revolutionary nuclear reactors; the Pressurised Water Reactor 3 which will have a longer lifespan and be cheaper in the long term.

The whole replacement programme is expected to cost between £11bn and £14bn.

End to Viper tension

THIS is the moment the most anticipated warship in a generation proved it was finally ready to take her place on the right of the line.

Leaving an orange trail of smoke behind it, an Aster missile accelerates away from its silo aboard HMS Daring somewhere off the Outer Hebrides.

It's the first time the £1bn destroyer has fired her main armament – more than five years after she was launched and more than a decade since the order for the lead ship in the Type 45 programme was placed.

Daring's younger sister HMS Dauntless has already loosed a Sea Viper at a drone target on the ranges off Benbecula.

But Daring's programme – she was away in the USA exercising with the USS Enterprise carrier battle group while Dauntless was having Sea Viper 'fun' and has been undergoing maintenance and upgrades in Portsmouth since returning from America – meant it was not until this spring she's been able to show her venom.

The vertically-launched missile, which can reach speeds of up to Mach 4 (over 3,000mph – four times the speed of sound or nearly one mile every second) – is, according to the blurb, able to knock down a target the size of a cricket ball travelling at Mach 3 up to 75 miles away, manoeuvring for the kill at G Forces no human could endure.

In this instance, the target was a rather slower (subsonic) jet drone, hastily dispatched by Daring which means the Portsmouth-based warship is now fully operational.

“This firing is a significant milestone for us and the final piece in the jigsaw as we prepare for our first deployment,” said the destroyer's Commanding Officer Capt Guy Robinson. “I am very pleased with the test and how my team conducted themselves during this very complex procedure.”

The successful firing comes as the MOD announces that support for the Sea Viper weapon system has been secured for the next six years.

The £165m contract has been awarded to MBDA UK, based in Bristol and Stevenage, to provide technical assistance to the Sea Viper systems on all six destroyers that will be based at Portsmouth Naval Base.

Three of the sextet are now on the South Coast (Daring, Dauntless and recently-commissioned Diamond). No.4 (Dragon) is completing her second set of sea trials (see left), while No.5 (Defender) and No.6 (Duncan) are being completed at BAE Systems' Scotstoun yard on the Clyde.

Picture: MBDA UK

The first...

NEW ice patrol ship HMS Protector was making her inaugural appearance in Portsmouth as *Navy News* hit the presses.

Protector is intended to plug the gap as the Navy's Antarctic vessel while Whitehall chews over the fate of HMS Endurance; the Red Plum has been out of action since a flooding incident off Chile which almost sank her nearly three years ago.

In the interim, Whitehall is taking the icebreaker/Polar research ship MV Polarbjørn (Polar Bear) on loan over three years.

She entered Portsmouth under the Norwegian flag until she's formally transferred into the Royal Navy on June 1 as HMS Protector and commissioned on June 23.

Polarbjørn has undergone a whirlwind ten-day refit in Odense, Denmark, where her flight deck was moved from the bridge roof to the stern and a multi-beam echo sounder survey system was fitted and Royal Navy insignia added.

Her 88-strong ship's company, led by CO Capt Peter Sparkes, will spend the summer and early autumn gearing up for her inaugural deployment to the southern polar region in November.

Initially Protector will receive a small motor launch crammed with hi-tech survey kit and two Pacific 22 RIBs; the latter will be replaced on her second Antarctic deployment by a landing craft to move personnel and equipment from ship to shore.

The new ship will also carry three all-terrain vehicles and three quad bikes plus trailers to help the ship's company re-supply British Antarctic Survey scientists in their far-flung outposts.

...and the last

THREE hours before Protector passed Round Tower for the first time, HMS Gloucester did so for the final occasion in a 26-year-career.

The destroyer completed her final deployment – six months around the Falklands/South Atlantic/South Americas – earlier this spring, but that wasn't quite the end of the Gloucester story.

This week she's been working with a substantial US-RN-Franco-Spanish task force in the Western Approaches, headed by the USS George H W Bush, the US Navy's newest supercarrier, on Exercise Saxon Warrior.

With those final duties done, and just short of 800,000 miles on the odometer, the Type 42 destroyer will enter Portsmouth for the last time flying a long decommissioning pennant and with her ship's company holding their heads high to the end.

None more so than CO Cdr David George. “I cannot express how proud I am of the ship. She's coming in for the last time having given the cream of the US Navy a run for their money in one of the biggest exercises off the South Coast for years,” he said,

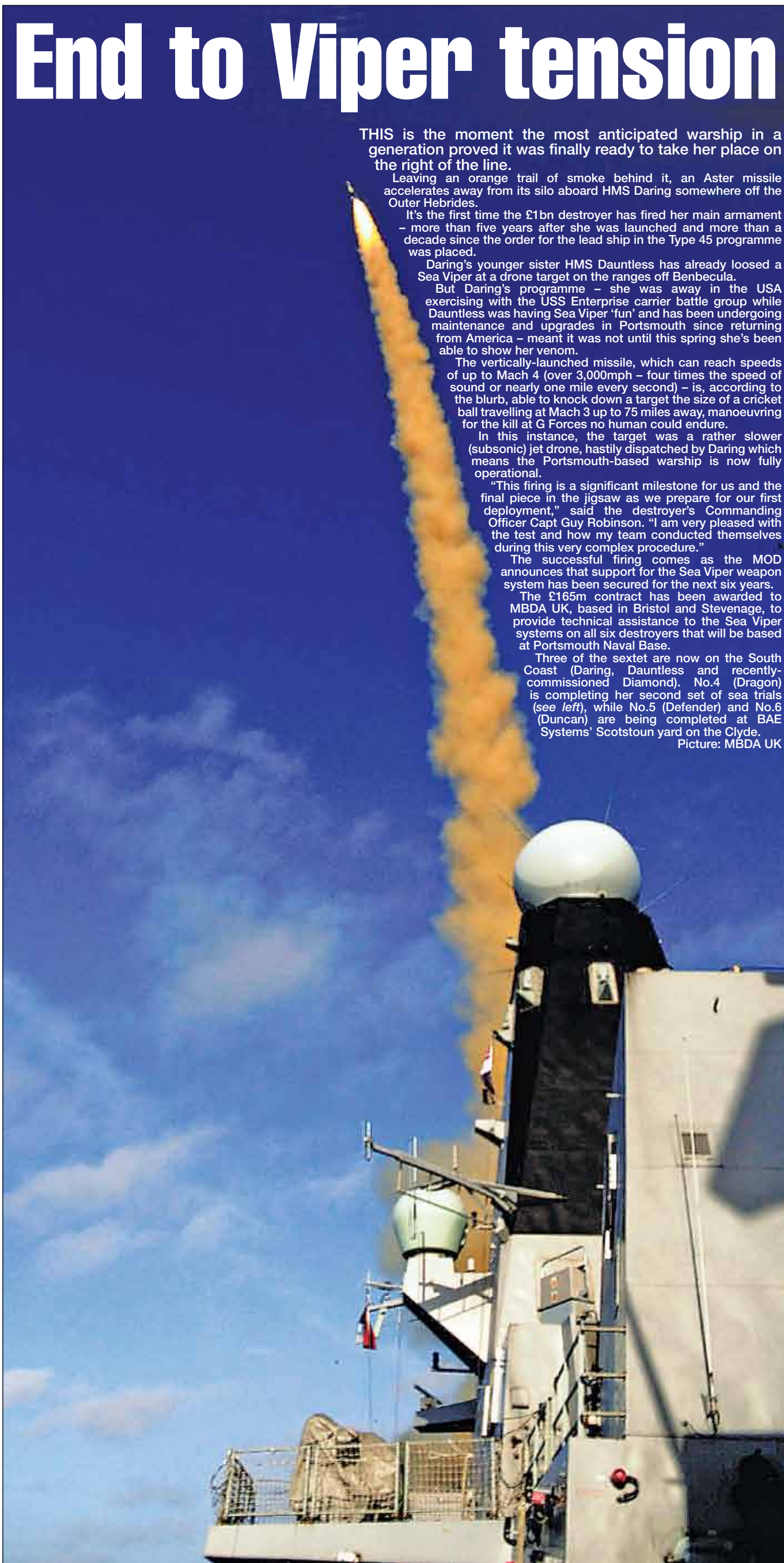
“It will be a very emotional final entry for the very best of ships – but she's 29 years old and with more than 750,000 miles under her belt, there are more capable Type 45 destroyers now taking the stage and Gloucester's time has come to bow out with dignity.”

In between the Fighting G's final deployment and final exercise, the ship's company found time to say their farewells to the good folk of Gloucester.

The destroyer spent five days in Avonmouth hosting affiliates, Sea Cadets, schoolchildren and VIPs.

The highlight of the visit was a service of thanksgiving in the city's cathedral for the men and women who have served in the ship since 1985, plus a march through the heart of Gloucester.

The guests of honour at the ceremonies were the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester (the latter is the destroyer's proud sponsor and has followed the warship's progress avidly since she launched her in Southampton in 1982).





Tributes to 'little Big Man' Deano

AN INSURGENT bomb has claimed its first victim on the current tour of duty by Royal Marines in Afghanistan.

Mne Nigel Dean Mead of Lima Company, 42 Commando, was killed during a search operation in Afghanistan on Sunday May 15.

The green beret, known as Deano to his friends, was involved in a search operation of suspect compounds in the Nad Ali district of Helmand.

The 19-year-old was described by his Commanding Officer, Lt Col Ewen Murchison, as "the epitome of a Royal Marines Commando."

"A young man with considerable inner strength, he was selfless, warm-hearted, utterly professional, and took enormous pride in his job."

"At the moment his life was cut tragically short, he was operating deep in insurgent-controlled territory, where the threat of improvised explosive devices was high, demonstrating characteristic bravery and unwavering loyalty to his fellow marines."

Words echoed by Cpl Al Morrell, the Fire Support Group Section Commander, who said: "It was a pleasure to have known Deano; he was an awesome guy with a great sense of humour and a shocking dress sense."

"As his section commander I couldn't have asked for a better marine."

"He threw himself at everything he did, a crack shot, and probably the best Marine at close quarter battle within 42 Commando, having been a demonstration man for the last two years, displaying slick drills to the unit."

"Deano displayed the finest qualities of a Royal Marine; the smallest man in the section with the largest Bergen and an even bigger grin on his face."

He concluded: "We will miss him dearly."

Born in 1991, Deano Mead grew up in Carmarthen and joined the Royal Marines in October 2008.

He earned his green beret in July 2009 as an original member of 977 Troop – the youngest marine to pass out that day.

His father Philip said: "Our Dean, our boy, our little Big Man, our hero, always wanted to be a Royal Marine and he turned out to be one of the best."

The young commando was killed as troops from Combined Force Nad Ali (North) – a mixture of men from 42 Cdo plus Afghan National Security Forces soldiers – carried out a sweep of compounds suspected of being used as bomb factories by insurgents.

Mne Mead arrived with comrades by helicopter in the Loy Mandeh wadi and was moving towards the compounds to begin the search when he was fatally injured in a blast from an improvised explosive device.

DATELINE Libya, the small hours of Thursday May 12 2011, the western Gulf of Sirte...

HMS Liverpool pummelled an enemy rocket battery after it opened fire on Allied warships off the besieged Libyan city of Misrata.

The words 'Four-five, engage' were issued after a salvo of rockets and small arms fire were aimed at Liverpool and Allied warships as they tried to stop Colonel Gaddafi's forces mining waters off the port.

The destroyer's main 4.5in gun responded – and silenced the pro-government battery.

It's the first time the main guns of the Royal Navy have been fired in anger since they plastered Saddam Hussein's defences in the opening moments of the 2003 Iraq campaign.

The drama began when NATO warships moved close to the shore to intercept two small pro-Gaddafi craft off Zlitan, some 30 miles west of the contested city of Misrata, with Liverpool's Lynx overhead providing aerial cover.

Government forces responded and tracer streaked across the Mediterranean towards the warships and Lynx, all of which took evasive action.

"It all got quite dramatic from there," said Liverpool's CO Cdr Colin Williams, whose ship now moved in to engage the foe.

The veteran destroyer's main 4.5in gun was able to respond at longer range than other NATO ships off Libya.

And so with LS Hayley Richards on the button and Cdr Williams in the hot seat, the Type 42 opened fire.

"It was very humbling to see my ship's company working so calmly and quietly," said Cdr Williams. "There was no jingoism, no shouting, the atmosphere was cool as people went about their jobs."

Having silenced the shore battery, Liverpool withdrew. The action lasted no more than 30 minutes and Allied forces sustained no casualties.

"This is not the first time we've been to Action Stations for real,"

DATELINE Libya, the afternoon of Friday April 29 2011, the western Gulf of Sirte...

THE image is rather grainy and monochrome, but the object is unmistakable.

This is a mine, laid by Gaddafi's forces off Misrata – and blown up by HMS Brocklesby minutes later.

Crudely tethered to an inflatable boat – sunk to serve as a makeshift 'mooring' – the mine packs 100kg explosive and was laid just a mile off the entrance to the Libyan port.

It was one of three dumped in the waters off Misrata by pro-Gaddafi forces – who made repeated attempts to close the port.

The city has been held by rebel forces for several weeks, but is under siege from government troops who have made concerted efforts to re-take the city on land, and to halt the flow of humanitarian aid by sea.

NATO forces enforcing UN Security Council resolutions off Libya observed pro-Gaddafi forces laying three tethered mines.



● Anxious looks on Liverpool's bridge as the destroyer carries out her UN peacekeeping duties off the hostile shore of Libya
Picture: LA(Phot) Abbie Gadd, FRPU East

said Officer of the Watch Lt Ebony Dalton.

"The whole ship's company were well versed in the actions to be taken on hearing the general alarm. It was a well-oiled machine."

As Liverpool moved out of harm's way following the bombardment "the release of tension was audible", said Lt Dalton.

As for the two craft which sparked the original NATO actions that morning, they were beached before they could lay their deadly 'eggs'.

Liverpool's actions in the darkness of May 12 received international media coverage and were another reminder that the men and women of the Royal Navy are in harm's way off Libya.

As *Navy News* went to press, the Crazy Red Chicken was conducting her second sustained patrol off the troubled North African state, enforcing United Nations Security Council resolutions – preventing arms and munitions reaching Gaddafi and ensuring aid reaches the free peoples of Libya.

Perhaps the most unsung element of Liverpool's mission is to help direct NATO aerial

operations, striking at the Libyan leader's war machine.

Two fighter controllers – Lt Grahame 'Freddie' Flint and French exchange officer Lt Nick 'Steaming' Lesbats – have, said Cdr Williams, "been working above and beyond in support of the No-Fly Zone over Libya".

RN fighter controllers are expected to carry out ten hours of direction every six months on exercises.

Off Libya, Lts Flint and Lesbats have clocked up 40 hours' fighter control apiece in a single month – which gives an idea of the scale of the international operation, and the strain on the Liverpool ops room.

And for five hours Britain's second oldest active warship was directing all Allied aerial activity in the No-Fly Zone.

Typically the work is carried out by AWACS patrol aircraft, but when both E3 Sentries charged with the task had to return to base with defects one morning, Liverpool plugged the gap.

"At any one time, the zone is patrolled by several NATO fighters and fighter bombers, all supported by a chain of airborne tankers and maritime patrol aircraft," explained Lt Flint.

Liverpool's air team is smaller than that in an E3 – and there are fewer radios too – but the destroyer's air warfare officers Lt Cdrs Ally Pollard and Jon Goulder knuckled down to the unexpected duty.

The fighter controllers marshalled the picture and LAC Henry Parish, the ship's helicopter controller, found himself pressed into the unfamiliar but exciting role of passing targeting information to RAF and NATO strike aircraft.

A flashed message to the French destroyer Jean Bart, operating in support of Liverpool, had their fighter controller shaken from his bed in order to provide another voice and another radio to the team.

This went on for five hours until a working US Air Force E3 arrived on the scene and Liverpool could resume normal duties...

...which are six hours on, six hours off, as the destroyer is in defence watches.

But that does not mean there has not been time for a little relaxation.

The senior rates somehow managed to arrange a 'street party' in the junior rates' dining hall to mark the Royal Wedding.

Tea, cakes, sandwiches, crisps and sausage rolls were laid out for the occasion.

In the evening, a traditional British fish and chip supper was put on by the caterers on the flight deck.

Off-watch time has also been used to raise money for one of Liverpool's dead comrades.

ET Kyle Bartlett was fatally injured by a single punch during a brawl at a Portsmouth pub in 2009.

The 21-year-old loved the Royal Navy, loved Liverpool, loved being a stoker, and, said shipmates "always had a smile on his face".

His family is determined something good should come from his death through the Kyle Bartlett Memorial Fund and the One Punch Can Kill campaign, aimed at highlighting the dangers of binge-drinking and alcohol-related violence.

Kyle's ME department took to the rowing machines for 24 hours to support the charity. They clocked up 208 miles and, more importantly, raised £550.

And just to prove that in the midst of war, Jack and Jenny can keep their fabled sense of humour, the smallest (and possibly funniest) member of the ship's company, Colin the Bear, is being treated to all aspects of life aboard.

The cuddly toy is the mascot of Linaker Primary School on Merseyside and was donated to the ship by youngsters, who were keen to follow Colin's adventures as he travelled the Seven Seas with the destroyer.

In a break with usual RN disciplinary rules, he's been allowed to live in the 2F ladies mess, where LS(CIS) Emma Adams is looking after him.

She's provided Colin with his own miniature set of overalls and ear defenders so he can assist the stokers and help out with the gash crushing.

He bagged two goals in the flight deck hockey, then helped Cdr Williams judge a karaoke contest.

All perfectly normal in the middle of a war...

Another blow to Gaddafi from Triumph

DATELINE Libya, the evening of Monday May 16 2011, the western Gulf of Sirte...

JUST days after returning to Devonport flying the Jolly Roger, HMS Triumph returned to the Med with her bomb shop crammed with Tomahawk missiles again.

That compartment has begun to empty once more. After firing six cruise missiles at strategic government targets during her first deployment off Libya, Triumph began her second tour of duty with a series of strikes on the night of May 16.

The submarine's salvo was part of a co-ordinated effort by the RN and RAF to neutralise the bases and training facilities of Gaddafi's Executive Protection Force – the regime's police and intelligence agency which is used to keep the Libyan people in check – around Tripoli.

As well as gathering information on the regime's potential opponents, the force was used to bloodily put down an anti-Government demonstration in the Libyan capital in March.

Maj Gen John Lorimer, spokesman for the Chief of Defence Staff, said the facilities smashed by the RN/RAF strike "lay at the heart of the apparatus used by the regime to brutalise the civilian population".

Brocklesby in the line of fire



"My team have handled themselves superbly in the execution of this mission reacting stoutly to the very real threat posed by rockets and artillery ashore."

A second mine was blown up by another NATO vessel, while the third mine became detached from its mooring and floated off. Minehunters are continuing the search for it, but in the meantime the port of Misrata remains open – for aid to flow in and for civilians to leave if they wish to.

"I am extremely pleased we have been able to dispose of ordnance in the approaches to Misrata that is now a vital lifeline for the delivery of humanitarian aid into Libya," Lt Cdr Byron added.

"Our actions on behalf of NATO are directly contributing to the continued welfare of the Libyan people."

"In helping to keep the port of Misrata open we are ensuring the continued flow of essential medical assistance and allowing the evacuation of innocent civilians from the country."

Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox praised the Brocklesby team for their "vital work" off Libya.

"This is helping prevent Gaddafi's forces from sealing off the port to deny medical and food supplies to the people of Misrata," he added.

Allied mine warfare forces – part of the 19-strong NATO armada in the Gulf of Sirte – were ordered in to deal with the threat.

With Brocklesby closed up at action stations and all ship's company in anti-flash, her state-of-the-art sonar and Seafox disposal system were used to locate one of the mines – the latter hi-tech piece of kit provided a live video feed back to the Portsmouth-based minehunter's ops room.

With the order 'Command

approved' from CO Lt Cdr James Byron, a charge from Seafox blew up the mine – causing a small plume of first white and then black water to rise above the surface as the device and the sunken inflatable were sent to kingdom come.

"This is exactly the kind of operation my crew have trained for: dealing with live mines posing a threat to legitimate shipping within sight and range of shore bombardment," he said.

Time to wow Brittany's peers

FRESH from an unexpected month off Libya on UN peacekeeping duties, HMS Westminster has reverted to a Type 23 frigate's typical role: hunting submarines.

In tandem with her Merlin from 829 Naval Air Squadron, Britain's 'capital ship' headed to the Bay of Biscay for French-run war games off Lorient and the Brittany peninsula.

Spontex 11 was designed to exercise a multi-national task group close to shore where there is a significant submarine threat.

French, Polish, Swedish and German ships and boats – comprising more than 1,500 naval personnel in all – joined the Portsmouth frigate in Lorient before heading out to sea.

The French officer overseeing the ten-day exercise, Vice Admiral Jean-Pierre Labonne, used Westminster as the venue for the press conference to launch the exercise.

He stressed the importance of anti-submarine warfare in the modern world, dwelling on the proliferation of submarines around the world and the very real threat that they posed.

"This is not a threat from the past," the French admiral pointed out.

"There are 450 submarines in service worldwide, 90 under construction and 140 on order."

For Westminster's Commanding Officer Cdr Tim Green – a former deep – this was a chance to knuckle down to "some good hunting"...

...which was made rather easier thanks to the presence of the world's No.1 sub-hunting helicopter aboard his ship.

829 NAS also despatched two more Merlins from their home at Culdrose for Spontex, using the French Navy's air station at Lann-Bihoué in Lorient as their base.

It gave the aircrews a chance to test the Merlins against 'enemies' not typically encountered in waters so close to the UK.

Remember forces' deeds

DON'T pack away that Royal Wedding bunting yet for the third Armed Forces Day celebrates servicemen and women past and present this month.

Since Veterans' Day turned into Armed Forces Day in 2009, one of the UK's major cities has been the focal point for Britons to show their support for those in uniform.

Last year it was Cardiff, this year all eyes shift to the Scottish capital, although communities across the land are being encouraged to stage events, from medal presentations to street parties.

Armed Forces Day itself is Saturday June 25, but the events in Edinburgh will be spread over a whole weekend.

From Friday June 24, the city will host aerial displays, exhibitions, a parade and a ship open to visitors – this year the honour falls to HMS Portland, whose sailors will be hosting tours.

There will also be displays by the Royal Marine Commandos; a Royal Navy Field Gun team; cadets; and various water-based shows in Leith Docks, culminating in a full display by the Red Arrows over the Firth of Forth. A parade of up to 1,500 serving personnel, veterans and cadets will march down the Royal Mile to Holyrood Park.

If you can't make it to Edinburgh, the Armed Forces Day website – www.armedforcesday.org.uk – gives details of events held all over the country, as well as guidance on holding your own event to celebrate – you can even buy custom-made flags and bunting on-line to add a bit of colour to the celebrations.

Beginnings and endings

FOR the second time in her career, HMS Ramsey has begun the 6,000-mile journey to the Gulf for an extended tour of duty in the Middle East.

The ship left Faslane as the Navy starts to rotate its four-strong minehunting force based in Bahrain.

As befits a protracted deployment – up to four years – the ship was given quite a send-off: friends and families were invited aboard and a short religious service was held, led by Fr Andrew McFadden, chaplain of the Faslane Flotilla, to wish the ship well during the lengthy passage to her new home. Upon sailing, tugs squirted their fire hoses in appreciation.

Ramsey spent more than two years in the Gulf, heading home to Scotland in early 2009. After some much-needed TLC and extensive training and exercises in home waters, the Sandown-class ship is ready to resume Gulf duties.

Her role – as well as that of the other RN ships based in Bahrain – is to keep these vital sea lanes free of mines and work with Allied navies and navies in the region.

Rotating the 36-strong ship's company every six or so months will allow Ramsey to spend so long in the Gulf.

"We are embarking on a great adventure which will be a fantastic experience for the crew," said Ramsey's Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Alex Bush.

"In a ship as small as Ramsey, we all have to work together to get the job done properly – but what a job it is: clearing the seaways for other ships to follow.

"You must remember that 95 per cent of Britain's trade is still done by sea. This is the Royal Navy's way of playing its part in keeping those passages safe for trade – as well as for our bigger warships. Those ships – with their steel hulls – couldn't go into action – without us clearing the way for them first."

As Ramsey departs, several hundred miles away HMS Quorn is also preparing to leave the UK for Bahrain.

The Hunt-class ship is relieving her sister Chiddingfold and is due to be away from her Portsmouth home for up to three years; her prolonged presence is also sustained thanks to regular crew rotation.

It will take around six weeks for the 23-year-old warship to reach her new operational theatre. On her way to the Middle East she's due to carry out maritime security sweeps – monitoring shipping and denying criminals/terrorists/pirates the use of the seven seas – as well as acclimatising to the extreme temperatures in the Gulf (upwards of 60°C) once the ship reaches the Red Sea.

While Quorn and Ramsey head east, Chiddingfold is gearing up for the return journey to the UK.

It's a tough passage home for the ship's company... and we're not talking about the length of the journey, or the weather they might encounter.

Ships returning from the Middle East typically 'row the Suez' using the vessel's onboard rowing machines. The canal's a 'mere' 120 miles long, far too short for the energetic team on Chiddingfold. They intend to run, row and ride the 5,000 miles from Bahrain to Pompey using the ship's gym machines.

First is a run/ride covering the distance from Bahrain to Aqaba in Jordan (just shy of 1,000 miles). Then it's on to the rowing machine for the Red Sea, Suez and Med as far as Faro at the tip of Portugal (3,000 miles).

Once the ship reaches there, the crew will climb back on the cycling and running machines for the 1,000-mile overland trip to Cherbourg. The last leg home from France (85 miles) will be concluded on the rower.

"It will take nothing less than

100 per cent dedication for all personnel to achieve this immense challenge, but we are determined to do it," said Chid's CO Lt Cdr Charles Maynard.

"There will no doubt be times of bad weather, machinery and equipment defects to rectify, and with only one of each machine onboard, the likelihood of a breakdown will be high given their usage."

As well as keeping the sailors fit, the key aim of the challenge is to raise money for prostate cancer research – among men the disease is responsible for more deaths than any other form of cancer except lung. Once the challenge begins later this summer, you'll be able to follow the progress via Chiddingfold's page on the Royal Navy website.

■ FOR the last time the White Ensign is lowered at Umm Qasr and the Royal Navy's eight-year mission in Iraq comes to an end.

On Sunday May 22 Operation Telic – the British codename for the 2003 campaign against Saddam Hussein and the subsequent peacekeeping mission – was officially over.

The last Britons – six dozen Royal Navy sailors and Royal Marines, plus a smattering of RAF and Army personnel – will pull out of Umm Qasr, where they've trained the Iraqi Navy since 2003.

Thanks to the efforts of the team at Umm Qasr, the principal Iraqi naval base, around 1,800 sailors and marines have been trained to such a standard that they are now guarding the country's two oil platforms in the northern Gulf.

The terminals – Khawr al Amaya and Al Basrah – are responsible for pumping oil into waiting tankers, generating more than 80 per cent of Iraq's income.

The Royal Navy carried out its final patrol of the platforms in April when HMS Iron Duke completed a stint around the Al Basrah terminal.

Now the training team – in its latest incarnation it's the Iraq Training Assistance Mission or ITAM (Naval), although longer-standing Navy News readers will possibly remember it as the Naval Transition Team or NaTT – is coming home, mission accomplished (a US contingent will remain in Umm Qasr, however).

"Although conducted out of the limelight, the work of British forces in Iraq since the end of the combat mission two years ago, spearheaded by the Royal Navy, has achieved significant results," said Brig Tim Chicken, the Royal Marine in charge of ITAM (Naval).

"We have led the development of the Iraqi Navy, seeing its growth from the most rudimentary of capability into one that stands at the cusp of taking complete responsibility for its territorial waters and critical offshore oil infrastructure.

"I am confident that our work with the Iraqi Navy has set the agenda for a fruitful, long-term defence relationship between our two countries and everyone here is very proud of the role they have played."

Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox singled out the hundreds of Senior Service personnel who've served in Umm Qasr and on or around the oil platforms for their "formidable skills and expertise" in transforming Iraq's naval forces.

He added: "I am proud of the role British forces have played in making it capable of doing that job."

Despite the end of Telic, there will continue to be a small UK military presence in Iraq, in particular providing officer training and education, plus staff at the British Embassy in Baghdad.



● Ramsey heads into the Clyde at the beginning of her 6,000-mile journey to the Gulf for an extended tour of duty in the Middle East. Picture: LA(Phot) Ben Sutton, FRPU North

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Richmond's 'pore show

NO MORE pirates for HMS Richmond – for the time being at any rate as the second half of her seven-month deployment opens.

After spending the spring in the Indian Ocean hunting pirates and working with regional security forces to help them deal with the scourge of 21st-Century buccaneers, the Portsmouth-based frigate has moved to the Far East for exercises with Britain's Commonwealth allies, notably Bersama Shield, air-sea war games involving forces from the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Singapore and Malaysia.

The 11-day workout in the South China Sea and around the Malaysian peninsula is now in its 40th year.

Richmond enjoyed her mid-deployment maintenance period in Singapore and flew the flag for the UK at the largest naval exhibition in this part of the world, Imdex, staged at Changi Naval Base.

A dozen navies were showcasing their military kit by sending warships to the three-day event, with the Type 23 hosting Singapore's Chief of Defence Force, Lt Gen Neo Kian Hong, who was given a briefing on the ship's 829 NAS Merlin helicopter.

Richmond is due home next month.

'Proud and ready to serve again...'

AFTER a £40m revamp, Britain's only aircraft carrier will return to sea on June 3 to start down the year-long road back to front-line duties.

HMS Illustrious hasn't been seen at sea since the beginning of 2010 when she sailed to Rosyth for a 16-month refit in the hands of Babcock.

Lusty was due to emerge from her refit as the nation's strike carrier, taking over from HMS Ark Royal.

Last autumn's defence review put the kibosh on those plans – and saw Ark axed as well as her Harriers. The review also meant Illustrious' refit plans had to be re-drawn.

Instead of returning from Rosyth as a Harrier carrier, she'll return to business as a helicopter assault ship, relieving HMS Ocean.

It took a couple of months following October's review to incorporate the changes into Lusty's refit, but since the turn of the year in particular, the ship has been a hive of activity.

When 2011 opened there were just 150 ship's company (fewer than a quarter of her typical complement) living ashore at nearby HMS Caledonia.



● Illustrious' new Commanding Officer Capt Jerry Kyd addresses his ever-growing ship's company in the carrier's hangar

Picture: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon, HMS Illustrious

Numbers quickly doubled and, with work sufficiently progressed and 'domestic functions' working once more – heating, lighting water, galleys – the sailors moved back on board on February 22 to the sound of pipe and drum.

"At that moment Lusty began to come alive once more," said Cdr Richard Winter, the carrier's weapon engineer officer.

Since then the ship's company

has almost doubled in size again – it's nearly 600-strong now, just 50 or so short of the normal complement – with Capt Jerry Kyd joining as Commanding Officer from Ark Royal.

Work carried out since the revamp began early last year includes super-efficient paint applied to the hull which will mean the 20,000-ton warship will cut through the ocean faster – cutting her fuel bill in the process.



Living quarters have been spruced up, the latest MOD computer system (DII) fitted throughout the ship – no mean task as Illustrious was designed in the pre-personal computer age – 500m (1,640ft) of pipework replaced, plus 650 valves and all eight exhausts.

All well and good, but all that technology and equipment is no good without Jack and Jenny. Lusty's sailors have been conducting extensive training: fire and flood, duty watches, firearms,

personal protection, engineering trials, machinery brought back to life, the ops room, flight deck and hangar restored to normal.

At the same time Illustrious' soul has been revived by personalising mess spaces, sporting activities, morning prayers and Sunday services, and the daily rituals of Colours and Sunset.

More than 200 Sea Cadets (including 71 in one go) have toured the carrier, as well as local VIPs and school children.

"The message from everyone aboard HMS Illustrious is clear – despite what you may read or hear: Lusty is on her way back to the Fleet," said Cdr Winter.

"A nearly-600-strong ship's company is working extremely hard to ensure that Illustrious sails from Rosyth on June 3rd for sea trials before rejoining the Fleet at the end of July.

"No doubt many people will be pleased to see Lusty back in her home port, proud and ready to serve the nation once again."

After the initial period of trials and return to the Solent, Illustrious will be alongside until the autumn when rigorous trials and training begin in earnest.

She's due to take over from Ocean as the nation's on-call helicopter carrier from the summer of 2012.

Sparkle in the spring sunshine

AFTER a long winter of farewells and decommissioning ceremonies, there was a palpable sense of new beginnings in Portsmouth as HMS Diamond was welcomed into the Fleet on a bright spring day.

Just yards away from her sister Daring, Diamond's paintwork sparkled in the May sunshine as about 1,000 guests, including 190 of the ship's company, gathered on Victory Jetty for her commissioning ceremony.

The ship's sponsor, Lady Johns, said that Diamond seemed a very different ship from the one she launched three-and-a-half years ago on a damp November day on the Clyde.

"She was a rough diamond then compared to what she is today – a finely polished stone," she said.

She added: "As Diamond moves on to her next stage, I would like to give a special thanks to the ship's company whose ship this is, and also acknowledge the part played by their families and friends.

"As a naval wife, I know how important that is." The commissioning ceremony was led by the Chaplain of the Fleet, the Venerable Scott Brown, and attended by the Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir Trevor Soar and the Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Charles Montgomery.

Among the guests were the Mayor of Coventry and the leader of Aberdeen City Council, Diamond's affiliated cities; 24 members of the HMS Diamond Association, and representatives from many of the industries who had built her. Diamond's christening presents included a

diamond presented by de Beers, who have been affiliated to the name since 1962, and a collection of silverware from the HMS Diamond Association.

Jaguar Land Rover presented her with a highly polished wooden table inlaid with the ship's crest, which will be used as the Captain's table. Craftsmen from the specialist veneers department of the Jaguar workshops in Coventry, who usually make interiors for luxury cars, had spent several months working on it.

The most moving of all her gifts was the Cross of Nails, one of the replicas of the famous Coventry Cross, which was created from three mediaeval nails salvaged from the rubble of Coventry Cathedral after the city was razed in 1940.

The Cross of Nails was in HMS Coventry when she was bombed in the Falklands in 1982, and divers recovered it from her wreck a few months later.

Capt David Hart-Dyke, Commanding Officer of HMS Coventry during the Falklands campaign, presented it to Diamond's CO, Cdr Ian Clarke. He said: "The cross was given to HMS Coventry in 1978.

"Four years later, when we went to war in the South Atlantic, it remained in a prominent part of the ship rather than being stowed away, and it became a symbol of defiance and hope of survival."

He added: "I'm sure it will mean as much to you as to us."

Cdr Clarke said the spirit of the wartime HMS Diamond, which was sunk by the Luftwaffe in April 1941 after her heroic actions evacuating Allied troops from Greece, lived on in the current ship.



He said: "I am very conscious of the 'golden thread' of history which linked this Diamond to her illustrious predecessors. If we are called upon to fight, that golden thread must not be broken."

He added: "A sense of duty combined with good humour is a characteristic of Diamond."

Looking to the future, he said: "This is a proud moment for all on board HMS Diamond. As she nears the end of her trials phase, this ceremony marks our transition to front line service. Thereafter, the emphasis will be on combat readiness in preparation for our first deployment next year.

He added: "There is a real sense of expectancy aboard the ship – we are all itching to get on to an operational footing."

After the formal commissioning service, the youngest member of the ship's company, ET Ross Hindmarch, 17, cut the cake with the CO's wife, Joanne.

Lady Johns, wife of Vice Admiral Sir Adrian Johns, former Second Sea Lord and now Governor of Gibraltar, presented the ship with a watercolour of the current Diamond with two of her predecessors, and said she intended to visit from time to time to make sure they were looking after it.

She said: "It is a huge privilege and honour to me to be her sponsor, and I would like to give a special thanks to the ship's company."

She added: "A ship has many companies over the years, but she only has one lady sponsor, and I shall always be on hand to see that all is well with her."

The HMS Diamond Association was represented by 24 of its 130 members, including

Cdr Jock Mancais, who commanded HMS Diamond from 1968-70 and who had travelled from Dorset for the ceremony.

He said: "I've been on board twice and was very impressed with what I saw. The first time I saw her, I thought she was like Star Wars. We would have loved the sort of equipment she has when we were in the Far East."

He added: "And I would love to drive her now...."

Ray 'Legs' Shipley, Chairman of the HMS Diamond Association, named because he was the tallest in the galley in the previous Diamond, said: "We are all very proud of this new ship, and if everyone in the association could have been here today, they would have come."

"Our Diamond was lower in the water and faster but this one is more efficient."

He added: "But we do have one complaint – we were D35, but this one's D34 and HMS Dragon has D35 – it should have been us."

He said: "The association has very close ties to the ship, we are always made welcome, and Cdr Clarke is very hot on history."

The fourth Type 45, HMS Dragon, is due to arrive in Portsmouth for the first time in September. All six of the class are scheduled to be in service by the middle of the decade.

Picture: PO(Phot) Dave Gallagher, FRPU East



Collingwood enjoys its freedom

NEARLY four years to the day after they last celebrated ties with their hometown sailors from HMS Collingwood paraded through the streets of Fareham.

The training establishment has enjoyed the Freedom of the Borough since the summer of 1974.

Since exercising that right for the first time the following year – marching through Fareham's streets with colours flying, drums beating and bayonets fixed – Collingwood's personnel have taken to the borough's roads around a dozen times.

The last occasion coincided with the 25th anniversary of the Falklands campaign in May 2007, with Baroness Thatcher, premier at the time of the 1982 conflict, the guest of honour.

Four years on and the same honour fell to Fareham's mayor, Cllr Brian Bayford.

He was joined by Collingwood's Commanding Officer Cdre Tim Lowe inspecting the guard of honour and platoons formed up in the town's pedestrian precinct.

Taking place on a Saturday morning and in fine spring sunshine, the parade by 200 sailors was watched by a sizeable crowd of shoppers.

They also witnessed WOs Rosie Dodd and Nigel Buckley receive clasps to their Long Service and Good Conduct Medals from Cllr Bayford.

"We first marched through the town in 1975," explained XO Cdr Chris Lade. "It doesn't need to be done at any specific time or related to any sort of festival. We felt it was an appropriate time."

"I hope the public enjoyed it as much as we did."

AND so the Navy's 30-plus-year love affair with the Type 22 frigate is over.

Almost.

With the return of HMS Cornwall to Devonport the curtain comes down on front-line duties by frigates which have served their nation since the end of the 1970s.

And what a welcome there was for the last of the old breed on a magnificent spring day in the West Country.

A good six months had passed since the 900 or so people on the jetty had caught sight of the Fighting 99, which disappeared into the Channel last October bound for Pirate Alley (and environs).

Between then and April 26, Cornwall's final day at sea, the ship

served as flagship for a Pakistani staff directing the counter-piracy operation across 2.5 million square miles of ocean; freed five Yemeni fishermen held hostage on their dhow by brigands; detained 23 suspected pirates; disrupted numerous pirate attacks; shepherded merchant vessels through hostile waters; provided aid to three stricken mariners; supported the Queen's visit to Oman; prowled the Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean; worked with the forces of Pakistan, Jordan, the UAE, Oman and Algeria; and took part in the IDEX defence showcase in Abu Dhabi... among other things...

It was, what you might say, going out with a bang.

Or rather coming in with a bang. In echoes of the final entry by her sister HMS Cumberland just a few days

earlier, there was an 11-gun salute, tugs squirting jets of water and a Lynx flypast.

That cacophony was compounded by the welcome provided on the jetty. One Plymouth Pipe Band. Nine hundred screaming and cheering families and friends – and not a few rather outlandish banners, plus Viking helmets 'sculpted'

from balloons (there was evidently a balloon twister on site producing a myriad creations from the Flag of St George to a white heart on a pole).

The rousing welcome they gave the ship after more than six months away was "the icing on the cake" to the Fighting 99's final, very successful deployment, said her last CO Cdr David Wilkinson.

"The support of the families is essential to us completing our operations – and the homecoming recognises the support our loved ones have given us to keep us strong over the past six months."

"We've arrested pirates and ensured safe passage of millions of pounds worth of cargo to the west through the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean."

"Arriving home after a long, hard and dangerous deployment is always an emotional time, but this was an especially sad occasion as it was Cornwall's final entry."

"HMS Cornwall is a most beautiful and capable ship – but she's one of the oldest class of ships and it is time for the old lady to retire."

Retirement officially comes before the end of summer when the book is closed on the Type 22 story. Cumberland pays off on June 23; Cornwall won't be far behind.

She has a farewell parade to attend in Truro where the ship's company will march through the Cornish county town before returning the Freedom scroll, followed by a formal decommissioning ceremony in Devonport when the White Ensign is lowered for good on the last day of the month.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Hooper, FRPU West



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Saint set for Gulf duties

HMS St Albans was due to sail from Portsmouth for a six-month deployment to the Indian Ocean and Gulf as *Navy News* went to press.

The Type-23 frigate will be taking over duties from HMS Iron Duke (see bottom of page) and will be patrolling busy shipping lanes and providing security for the region alongside other coalition forces.

Her work will include counter-terrorism, anti-piracy operations, exercises supported by coalition partners' naval forces and wider regional engagement to support and promote the UK's interests in the area.

Since her return from the Middle East in August last year St Albans has undertaken a variety of jobs, including a period of training off the coast of Plymouth and Scotland to prepare her for this deployment.

Her Commanding Officer, Cdr Tom Sharpe, said: "HMS St Albans has spent the last five months preparing for this deployment and is now ready to deliver."

"Influence will be our key output; whether that is patrolling the high seas to reassure or escort, actively looking for acts of smuggling or piracy, training or exercising with other navies or engaging in diplomatic efforts from alongside."

"Given the political climate in our anticipated operating area, or indeed the Eastern Mediterranean before we even get there, we must be prepared to cover the full gamut of naval tasking from routine to high intensity operations and be able to switch between them with traditional flexibility."

"HMS St Albans sails today ready to do just that."

Down to bare bones

WITH more than six months to go before she is ready for sea again, HMS Kent is at the 'low point' of her major refit.

The Type 23 has been high and dry at Rosyth since last November, and now everything that needs ripping out or stripping down has been attended to, and work is well under way in preparation for putting her all back together again, with a fair bit of new kit to be installed into the bargain.

The ship is due back on front-line duty in the autumn of 2012.

See next month for more details of Kent's progress.



Pictures: LA(Phot) Stu Hill

Black Duke prepares to take on the freebooters



● A firefighting exercise in the main machinery room of HMS Monmouth while en route to the Gulf of Aden

THERE might be plenty of room in the docks of Salalah in Oman, but moving a Royal Navy ship to her berth is still a precision manoeuvre.

In the picture (above) AB 'JT' Terry stands ready to throw a heaving line to an Omani dockyard worker, as HMS Monmouth glides smoothly alongside.

The visit to one of the largest ports in the region came early in the Black Duke's programme of anti-piracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden, which merges into the Arabian Sea somewhere to the south west of Oman's second city.

The frigate has replaced HMS Cornwall (now back in the UK) scouring the waters east of Suez for criminal activity.

Before raising the Operation Calash banner, Monmouth received stores and – most importantly – information from F99 about how to deal with the pirate menace.

Monmouth left Devonport at the end of March and made a couple of pit stops (Gibraltar and Souda Bay in Crete) on her way east.

En route, the ship overhauled HMS Invincible, being towed by tugs to a breaker's yard in Turkey.

A few Black Dukes who had served on the old carrier took a last look at Vince; it was, said logistics officer Lt Cdr Matt di Maio, "a poignant moment seeing the Falklands veteran at sea for the final voyage."

Monmouth's brief visit to the Rock permitted the obligatory race to the top, football and rugby fixtures against the local Combined Services and Barbarians respectively, and some exercising with the Gibraltar Squadron.

As for Souda, it's the standard port of call for NATO vessels about to head east of Suez; its ranges are used to test all radars and sensors, ready for the tasks ahead.

While the Black Duke's kit was tweaked, her Royal Marines from Fleet Protection Group honed their skills with the ship's own boarding team and the Black Knight, Monmouth's 815 NAS Lynx.

And the usual round of drills and shipboard exercises continued.

As the Type 23 sailed through Suez, there was an appreciable change on board.

"Among the ship's company there was a real sense that they were entering the operational theatre," said CO Cdr Dean Bassett.

"There was a change in mindset aboard – every member of the ship's company focused on their role ensuring that Monmouth can react quickly to any situation."

'Any situation' covers a wide range of possibilities as Monmouth has a vast domain (the Red and Arabian Seas, Indian Ocean and Gulf) and, aside from counter-piracy, the Black Duke will be asked to perform counter-smuggling and counter-terrorism sweeps and take part in international naval exercises.



Rare link-up in the Middle East

LEADING her much larger compatriot through the calm waters of the Gulf, minehunter HMS Grimsby meets up with HMS Iron Duke for a rare link-up.

Grimsby's about to end her two-year-plus tour of duty in the Middle East and return to the cooler surroundings of Faslane.

Iron Duke is making her debut in the Gulf and, in this instance, is shaking off the cobwebs after a fortnight in Dubai.

The city was the choice for the Type 23 frigate's mid-deployment stand-down, permitting essential work on the ship and a little R&R for the ship's company in the Gulf's top holiday destination – as well as two important visits.

Alan Duncan, Minister for International Development, was invited aboard for a briefing on the challenges encountered – and contribution made – by the RN and RFA in the Indian Ocean in the fight against piracy.

And shortly after came the Armed Forces Pay Review Body, the group of experts which provides the MOD with independent advice on the pay and allowances.

With the task of protecting Iraq's oil terminals now over – F234 completed the UK's eight-year mission with the final patrol of the Al Basrah platform in April – the role of the RN's Gulf frigate has assumed a wider role, providing support and reassurance to seafarers in the region.



Picture: LA(Phot) James Crawford

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Safe landing

AVIATORS from 847 Naval Air Squadron and the men and women who keep them airborne in Afghanistan have returned home to a rapturous reception from friends and loved ones.

As the group entered their hangar at RN Air Station Yeovilton after their four-month deployment they were met with cheers and applause – not least from the new Commanding Officer of the Somerset base, Cdre Paul Chivers. During their deployment, the squadron – part of the Commando Helicopter Force – operated from Camp Bastion in Helmand Province, along with their counterparts from the RAF and Army Air Corps.

847 are no strangers to the difficult flying conditions and challenging environment of Afghanistan, as they were previously deployed on an earlier phase of Operation Herrick with their Lynx Mk 7 helicopters.

But the old Mk 7s were only capable of operating during the day in the cooler months, and during the nights in the hotter temperatures of the Afghan summer.

The squadron subsequently converted to the Lynx Mk 9A, which has new engines that provide an all-year-round capability with little degradation in performance.

Along with the performance upgrade, the 7.62mm General Purpose Machine Gun has been replaced with the 0.5 inch M3M, which has a longer range, improved accuracy and multi-role ammunition.

This weapon, combined with the MX-15 surveillance camera system, has provided a significantly improved ability to provide effective top cover to patrols transporting essential supplies to the troops.



Lt Cdr Andrew Riggall, Commanding Officer of 847 NAS, praised the hard work of all members of the squadron.

“Preparations for this deployment essentially started back in July last year and the return to RNAS Yeovilton will mark the end of a challenging but rewarding period of operations for the squadron,” said Lt Cdr Riggall.

“It has been a team effort as always, but most importantly, we have delivered the essential escort and surveillance capability we were tasked with.

“I would like to think that we have acquitted ourselves well, and the difference the new Lynx has made in terms of power, armament and surveillance capability has been remarkable.”

The Lynx Mk 9A is a true multi-role helicopter, and during their tour 847 NAS provided an airborne escort service to the troops on the ground.

They also provided convoy over-watch and reconnaissance for ground forces and close air support.

On other occasions the aircraft were used to move essential equipment around Helmand, providing crucial support to UK troops fighting the Taliban, and undertook numerous missions with the United States Marine Corps.

Maj David Sutton, of 847 NAS, said: “The squadron has achieved a considerable amount over the past four months and we are confident that our efforts will help make Afghanistan a more peaceful country.

“This is an extremely tight-knit squadron and we are relieved that all our people have returned safely.”

POAET Richard Pickles said: “The squadron has put a tremendous amount of effort into ensuring our men and women are fully prepared for this operation.

“The engineers worked extremely hard to ensure our aircraft were ready 24/7 for any eventuality.

“It is fantastic being home in Somerset and we can’t wait to go on some well-deserved leave.”

Maj Brian Grant USMC offered

a slightly different perspective on the deployment.

“This has been a very productive tour,” he said.

“The experience of working with my British counterparts has been extremely valuable and very enjoyable – but I am now looking forward to spending some time with my wife and family.”

Whilst those returning will take some well-earned leave, the remainder of the squadron are working hard in a very different environment to Helmand (or even Somerset), embarked in HMS Albion on the Cougar deployment (see centre pages).

● *The excitement mounts (right) before members of 847 NAS return home to Yeovilton. One of the reunions saw Maj David Sutton RM greeted by his wife Sarah and daughters Heather, four, and two-year-old Ruby. (Below) A Lynx Mk 9A helicopter of 847 NAS with two RN Sea Kings over Afghanistan*

Pictures: LA(Photos) Vicki Benwell and Alex Cave



30 Cdo in the field – and on silver screen

SIX decades ago, an offensive Naval intelligence unit made up of Royal Marines ventured into Norway to capture vital Nazi technology that helped the Allies win World War 2.

As *Navy News* went to press, a new film telling the courageous story of 30 Cdo – *Age of Heroes*, starring Sean Bean – went on general release.

Its release comes as the current 30 Cdo – or 30 Commando Information Exploitation Group, to use their full title – are embarked on their first operational tour since that offensive back in 1943.

Despite their wartime successes, 30 Cdo were disbanded during post-war demobilisation, and it was only last December that the exalted title was reintroduced when it was adopted by UK Landing Force Command Support Group to better reflect the unit's role and continued use of the skills, techniques and methodology learnt by their forebears.

In early April, 30 Cdo deployed to Afghanistan on Op Herrick 14 as part of 3 Cdo Bde RM.

The primary role of the unit, made up predominantly of Royals but also including RN, RAF and Army personnel, is to gather information, understand that information to derive intelligence from it and thus influence operational decisions.

Lt Col Matt Stovin-Bradford RM, the CO of 30 Cdo, explained the role played by his men and women in the fight against the insurgents.

“30 Cdo’s mission in Afghanistan is to gain information superiority on the battlefield and gain intelligence from the enemy to ensure the future success of British and Afghan forces,” he said.

“While 30 Cdo isn’t the only intelligence unit in Afghanistan, it is among the few which can trace their lineage back to World War 2, applying many of the same covert principles but with the most modern technology.”

The modern day 30 Cdo comprises four

squadrons – Communications, Support, Logistics and Y Squadron – each at the forefront of obtaining and processing intelligence.

They have been bolstered in Afghanistan by two Royal Artillery batteries, who provide Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) assets and surveillance experts.

On Herrick 14, 30 Cdo Support Squadron is the Brigade Reconnaissance Force, an agile and flexible force, able to go deep into enemy territory unsupported and for protracted periods.

Their Officer Commanding, Maj Nick Foster RM, said: “Our job is to conduct intelligence-led operations, focused very much in the insurgents’ safe havens, operating well ahead of other Coalition forces.

“The BRF is independent on the battlefield and can find and identify insurgents, through basic soldiering methods to the most technical unmanned air vehicles, all while maintaining the ability to attack the enemy where he feels safe.

“Our activities frequently generate exploitable intelligence which we pass back to HQ Task Force Helmand.”

Information and intelligence is also collected and analysed by Y Squadron and their attached Intelligence Corps specialists.

Y Squadron intercept enemy communications and fuse their findings with the 30 Company Intelligence Teams who pass information to commanders to make tactical decisions based on the very best, up-to-date assessments of what is going on.

Through a combination of these and many other skills, in the short time they have been deployed, 30 Cdo have seized large quantities of opium, tens of thousands of US Dollars used to buy weapons and equipment on the black market, and been in close contact with the enemy in combat.



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Eastern outpost



● Vessels involved in Exercise Bersama Shield 11 alongside in Singapore. Pictured are Australian Anzac-class frigates HMAS Ballarat (foreground) and HMAS Parramatta, with HMS Richmond inboard, Astern of these three are the two RNZN frigates HMNZS Te Mana and HMNZS Te Kaha, and top left is Australian Collins-class submarine HMAS Dechaineux

Picture: LA(Phot) Caz Davies

THE China Station is just a distant memory, HMS Terror a mere echo from the past.

But there is still a permanent – if small – Royal Navy presence in South East Asia.

The White Ensign is still flying above the operations of Naval Party 1022 (NP1022), based at Sembawang Wharves in Singapore.

The main island of the 60-plus that make up the nation is roughly the same shape and size as the Isle of Wight, but the tiny state boasts one of the busiest ports in the world.

It also remains an important military centre, and NP1022 was established as part of the Five Powers Defence Arrangement (FPDA) in 1971, the year in which British forces finally withdrew from Singapore.

The FPDA is a mutual defence pact between the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia, and NP1022 – with its sister organisation Defence Fuels Group (Singapore) – manages a berthing, fuelling and storage facility on behalf of the first three nations.

In the early 1980s the United States Navy also came into the NP1022 fold.

And as befits the port's status, NP1022 is no cushy number in a foreign backwater.

Located to the north of the island in what used to be the old RN Dockyard, the Royal Navy Liaison Office (RNLO) and the Defence Fuels Group (DFG) arrange and host up to 170 ships annually, the majority of which



● The Sembawang war memorial

are support ships from the US Seventh Fleet.

As well as supporting warships from Australia and New Zealand, the UK team acts as ship's agent for all visiting RN and RFA vessels.

Although few and far between these days – the last major visit being Taurus 09 – regional support is possible, and there is a vital defence diplomacy and maritime security role to fulfil.

NP 1022 has close ties with the British High Commission, the Republic of Singapore Navy and the local community.

These ties are strengthened by Cdr Paul Haycock, who is not only the RN Liaison Officer but also the Assistant Defence Adviser, splitting his time between the roles.

The combining of the jobs also means that Cdr Haycock is well-placed to get the best from both the diplomatic and military side of Singapore.

The ties forged are used to give the RN a sound footing in not only Singapore but the wider

South East Asia region.

A great place to work and live, Singapore is probably on the assignment wish list of many people. However, it is not all sunbathing and sightseeing for the Navy team, as some might think.

The man who runs the wharf operation is CPO Dameon Clark, who co-ordinates all the ship visit requests.

He works with local agents and contractors to provide pilots, tugs, line-handlers and a seemingly never-ending list of other jetty services that are requested by visiting ships each day.

Even when he is not on duty Dameon is still very much on call 24/7 for ships from all over the world, and closer to home he is a key technical adviser when required.

Given the amount of work that is required for a ship's visit the rest of the team also have plenty to keep themselves occupied.

PO Steve Simpson deals with the daily management of office and accommodation, whilst processing the snowstorm of paperwork and bills that result from each ship visit.

His role extends from booking hotels and transport all the way to ordering paper clips and organising new TVs for a sailors' mess.

As security specialist and sports rep rolled into one he has his fingers in most pies and an extremely varied role to play.

S/Lt Dale Evers is in the envious position of having a hold-over in Singapore working with NP 1022.

The role he carries out sums up the flexibility with which all of the four-man team of the RNLO have to work.

Whether helping to host veterans on behalf of the High Commission, painting the war memorial or just booking cranes for stores, a day in Singapore is very rarely the same as the last.

A huge part of what is achieved in Singapore is the Defence Fuels Group supplying marine diesel and aircraft fuel to visiting ships.

On average DFG move 1,880,000 litres of fuel a day, which is the same as filling 31,000 average-sized car fuel tanks.

The fuel is piped around three miles from the Senoko Oil Fuel Depot to the wharf's edge and can also be supplied by bowser to

other locations.

The small but highly-effective team of MOD civil servants and locally-employed staff at DFG also help to maintain the wharf and provide other support functions such as mail, stores and transshipment of goods bound for the UK military detachment in Diego Garcia.

A good run ashore in South East Asia was part and parcel of the Royal Navy for many years, but more recently they have become few and far between.

So when HMS Richmond visited the 533 metres of Naval Party 1022's wharves in Singapore at the end of April it was something of a rarity.

This much-anticipated visit highlighted the importance of NP1022 and enabled them to demonstrate the first-class service which they provide to ships.

The usual work required for a foreign ship's visit is relatively small compared to a UK ship, which requires even more work and planning.

Liaising with the ship through signals, emails and many telephone calls, NP 1022 puts in place what the ship requires to fulfil its roles.

Once all the essential requirements for a visiting UK warship are met the office organises and offers numerous sporting events, transport, guides and even the odd bit of local knowledge for the ship's company.

The ship's first meaningful contribution in Singapore was a particularly important one.

HMS Richmond arrived in

time for the annual ANZAC Day memorial ceremony at the Kranji War Cemetery.

The ceremony took place at sunrise with sailors from Australia, New Zealand and the UK on parade in what was a fitting tribute to those who have given their lives in past conflicts.

On the sports field the inaugural Prince William Cup – played the day after the Royal Wedding – was won by the ship's football team over two matches against the British Club.

The victory capped a good week in which the team also beat the local Civil Defence Force side – amazingly their first wins of the deployment.

The ship's rugby team lost to local side the Wanderers in a particularly physical match, however, heads could be held high given their performance in the Singapore heat.

The amazing weather was a bonus for the cricket team, but unfortunately they couldn't make it count and also lost their fixture against the Misfits Cricket Club.

The sports results were varied but the excellent hospitality of the Singaporean locals and expats was a great experience for everyone.

The ship did give a little something back to the community by taking local children (and their excited parents) on tours of the frigate and allowed the people of Singapore to see a British warship up close.

Richmond also invited the local fire brigade, which is part of the Civil Defence Force, on board.

The members of the brigade were shown the ins and outs of firefighting on a ship and had the added bonus of the chance to take a look around.

The Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) sent a number of aviators for an aviation workshop.

The Singaporeans were given a presentation on how the Royal Navy fly and use Merlin aircraft, while also discussing how the Singaporeans work.

Following a highly-constructive and enjoyable time alongside, HMS Richmond bade farewell to the staff of NP 1022 in early May to take part in FPDA Exercise Bersama Shield.

It was not the last NP 1022 saw of her, as she returned to Singapore for the International Maritime Defence Exhibition 2011 (IMDEX 11) in mid-May.

IMDEX takes place every two years at Changi Naval Base and the Changi Exhibition Centre, attracting important figures from navies, companies and governments from around the world – including the Royal Navy's most senior officer, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope.

NP 1022 had the job of making sure that all the necessary arrangements were in place for both the ship and the First Sea Lord during their visits.

So although the UK does not have the personnel, bases or ships in Singapore that it did 40 years ago, it does still have a vital presence.

And, let's be honest – it's still a great run ashore...

● HMS Richmond bids au revoir to Singapore as she sails for Exercise Bersama Shield 11



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Congratulations and celebrations...

YOU wait all year for a bit of a party...

...and then there are three in a week.

One Royal Wedding (which actually involved quite a few parties), one freedom parade and one tenth birthday.

All in four busy days for HMS Portland in her namesake port as she returned to sea after a spot of TLC.

The frigate spent an eventful long weekend in Dorset – chiefly to renew bonds with locals after two years of hectic operations, and march through the streets of Weymouth, the warship's affiliated borough.

Two dozen sailors bomb-burst around the borough to attend four street parties (one in Portland itself, three in nearby Weymouth)... and those on board celebrated in mess decks.

It was, said PO Roberts, "a truly momentous British occasion".

He added: "We had a really great time at all the street parties and would like to thank everyone who hosted us for their generous hospitality. We were able to show our support for the newly-married Royal couple – and get to know people from our affiliated town."

Next up the freedom parade – a mixture of solemnity and celebration, with a service of thanksgiving at Portland's imposing cenotaph on the hilltop overlooking the harbour, before a march led by Portland Sea Cadets' band from TS Penn, ending in the village of Easton.

A crowd of cheering locals lined the route of the march, with a few hostelry patrons leaving their pints momentarily to step aside and encourage the Senior Servicemen and women.

Once the marching was complete, the mayors of Portland and Weymouth presented the ship's CO Cdr Mike Knott with a Portland flag... and the officer



● Under leaden Dorset skies, HMS Portland's Colours party leads the ship's company away from Portland's cenotaph on Tophill at the beginning of the Freedom parade

Picture: LA(Phot) Nicola Wilson, FRPU West

responded by handing over £1,000 for local good causes raised by the ship's company since their last visit in October 2009.

His ship wasn't open to the general public during her time alongside in Portland Harbour, but a select few were invited aboard, notably community groups and schoolchildren.

The visit ended with the tenth

anniversary commemorations (ten years since the frigate was commissioned rather than launched).

That was celebrated in company with Lady Brigstocke who sent a bottle of champers smashing into the side of the hull at the Yarrow yard in Scotstoun in May 1999



and was present two years later too when the frigate was commissioned.

She and other guests – her husband Admiral Sir John Brigstocke, the Earl of Portland, Dorset's Lord Lieutenant and Portland dignitaries – were invited to attend a reception on the ship's

rather cramped bridge before decamping to the wardroom for a more formal lunch.

"I was lucky enough to be at Portland's launch on the Clyde, so to be the logistics officer on board for her tenth birthday was a real honour," said Lt Cdr Kara Chadwick.

"The fact that the ship's sponsor could join us in Portland, together

with other friends of the ship, was a huge added bonus."

For some members of the ship's company not able to attend the meal, there was some consolation: Portland's affiliated brewery, Palmer's in nearby Bridport, offered a guided tour. The affiliation was, we're told, "heartily toasted"...

Two days later and with the Type 23 back home in Devonport there was a chance to celebrate the ship's birthday in the company of loved ones with a families' day alongside.

Steady rain meant the bouncy castle wasn't as popular as it might have been, but CH Lee Calver's ice cream stall in the junior rates' dining hall did a roaring trade.

The day was rounded off with a birthday dinner dance at Plymouth's Holiday Inn and (finally) cake all round courtesy of LCH Russell Keitch at the end of an evening of feasting, music and dancing.

As for the ship herself, she's spent the winter months unwinding after a seven-month stint in the South Atlantic (which featured heavily in these pages last year), followed by eight weeks of TLC in her home base of Devonport and now a spot of regeneration.

The quieter period over the winter has also allowed the ship's company to complete a comprehensive 'deployment book' packed with top imagery courtesy of ship's photographer LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson and news clippings from all over the Americas.

A £2,000 donation from BAE Systems helped with the cost of the publication – keeping prices down for the 180 or so ship's company, plus affiliates and friends eager for copies. Without the input from the defence firm, Cdr Knott said the cost of the books would have been too expensive to justify.

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Dash and carry

LIFTING off from the flight deck of flagship HMS Albion, a Jungly Sea King of 845 Naval Air Squadron conducts training off the coast of Cyprus.

It's a welcome change of temperature for the front-line squadron which began 2011 in the snow of northern Norway.

Admittedly only the UK-based members of the Yeovilton squadron headed to the Arctic Circle – the other half are heavily committed in the skies of Afghanistan.

Indeed, getting to sea with one of Britain's trio of assault ships – Albion, Bulwark and Ocean – has been something of a novelty this past decade for 845 and its sister front-line squadron, 846.

First Iraq and, more recently, Helmand have demanded the efforts of man and machine in support of the Allied mission on the ground – and it continues to do so now, with 845 and 846 both aiding 3 Commando Brigade.

But to maintain the Royals' amphibious expeditionary capability, the Junglies need to go to sea – hence four 845 Sea Kings are heading east with Albion, Ocean and the rest of the Cougar 11 task group in the Mediterranean (*see the centre pages*)...

...which is where 845 came into its own as a troop-carrying helicopter squadron half a century ago.

It demonstrated the versatility of the relatively-new aerial weapon with the 'vertical assault' on the Suez Canal during the 1956 crisis.

Indeed, apart from two years flying torpedo bombers in the second half of World War 2, 845 has been a cutting-edge helicopter formation for nearly 60 years.

The squadron was originally formed in February 1943 flying Grumman Avenger torpedo bombers, seeing extensive action in the Far East in 1944 and 1945.

Disbanded at the war's end, 845 reappeared in 1955 with Sikorsky S55s and, from 1957, Westland Whirlwinds,

as the first anti-submarine helicopter squadron in the Fleet Air Arm.

The squadron was disbanded again in 1959 before reforming in 1962 as the first commando helicopter squadron which saw immediate action in the jungles of Brunei and Borneo, establishing the 'jungly' nickname which persists today.

845 spent much of the 1970s and early '80s supporting the security and peacekeeping mission in Northern Ireland, but its helicopters were also sent to the South Atlantic in 1982 to liberate the Falklands.

Another invasion half a world away saw the squadron earn its next battle honour during the international effort to drive Saddam Hussein's forces out of Kuwait.

From the end of 1992 until 2005, 845 maintained a permanent presence in the former Yugoslavia supporting UN/NATO peacekeeping operations; the squadron became the longest-serving unit in theatre.

In 2003 the squadron returned to the Gulf, this time during the campaign to oust Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. As at Suez, it led the way with a 'vertical assault' to seize the vital Al Faw peninsula, home to key oil infrastructure – and the gateway to Basra and southern Iraq. For its deeds there in March and April 2003, 845 earned its most recent battle honour.

Once the dictator had been toppled, the Sea Kings remained in the country for three years supporting stabilisation efforts on the ground.

After improvements and upgrades to the Sea King Mk4s – hence the Mk4+ tag, with new rotor blades and tail rotors to cope with the challenging climate and altitude of Afghanistan, plus improved defensive kit to fend off the insurgent threat – and with the mission in Iraq over, 845 was sent to Afghanistan in March 2008.

Its men, women and helicopters have been committed there continuously ever since.



East Indies 1944-45
Burma..... 1945
Falkland Islands..... 1982
Kuwait 1991
Al Faw 2003

Motto: *audio hostem* – I hear the enemy

Aircraft: Westland Sea King Mk4+

Engines: 2 x Rolls-Royce

Gnome 1400-1 Turboshafts

Rotor Diameter: 18.9m (62ft)

Length: 17.5m (57ft 2in)

Speed: 125kts (143mph)

Crew: two pilots; one

aircrewman

Sensors: Defensive Aids

Suite; Display Night Vision

Goggles

Weapons: 1 x 7.62 General

Purpose Machine-Gun

Payload: Up to 26 Royal

Marines or underslung load

weighing 2720kg (6,000lbs)

Battle Honours

Facts and figures

HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.85 – Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach

UNDER the 14in guns of A turret – the barrels bear the tampions featuring the white rose of the House of York – sailors pose for the official naval photographer after dispatching the 'lucky' Scharnhorst six days previously.

Our dip into the vast photographic archives of the Imperial War Museum takes us to battleship HMS Duke of York and a rather wet Scapa Flow on New Year's Day 1944.

Second from the right on this image is one S/Lt Henry Conyers Leach, in command of A Turret in the famous Battle of the North Cape. It would prove to be the last 'big gun' action fought in European waters – but it would not be the defining moment in the then 20-year-old officer's career.

Four decades later and just months from retirement, it seemed as if the now Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach would end his 45-year naval career as a First Sea Lord who fought in vain to preserve the RN's expeditionary capability in the face of budget cuts and a Cold War doctrine that focused on submarines and land-based aircraft as foils to a Soviet threat in the North Atlantic.

Instead, the threat to Britain was realised in an entirely unexpected and – to many – a previously unknown quarter.

In April 1982 the military junta which ruled Argentina sought to salvage their crumbling support in an economically strapped country by fulfilling one of their nation's dearest dreams – the recovery, as they saw it, of the Malvinas, a group of cold, rocky and treeless islands 250 miles off Argentina's south-east coast.

Britain on the other hand called the islands the Falklands after a 17th century Admiralty Commissioner; and their sparse population – greatly outnumbered by the sheep they raised – were British with a history of ownership spanning the preceding 200 years. In the wider world the Falkland Islands were unfamiliar to most, with the exception of philatelists



schoolboys who prized the dependency's attractive postage stamps.

That changed virtually overnight: the invasion of the islands by the full force of the Argentine military, and the public humiliation of the small Royal Marines garrison, quickly became front-page news and pricked Britain's pride.

For Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's government, already unpopular as a result of stringent economic policies, the invasion was acutely toxic in political terms.

That the impetuous Argentine aggression played into Henry Leach's hands is self-evident: here, out of the blue, was an act of war against Britain's sovereignty and people which militarily could only be reversed by use of those expeditionary assets – aircraft carriers, amphibious assault ships and their escorts – which were on the point of being discarded by the reforms under way at the Ministry of Defence.

When at the end of March intelligence was received of the impending invasion the

Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Terence Lewin, was visiting New Zealand, while his deputy – an RAF officer – was elsewhere. Meanwhile, the then Defence Secretary – John Nott – had received a MOD brief that recovery of the islands by military means would not be practical once the Argentines had invaded – and it was clear that Britain did not have sufficient forces close enough to the islands to prevent occupation.

Admiral Leach did not hesitate. Seizing the moment, he

went to the House of Commons and was eventually ushered into a meeting of senior government figures including the Prime Minister and Mr Nott.

According to the admiral's own account, he told Margaret Thatcher that recovery of the Falklands was feasible if an amphibious task force with organic air support and of sufficient strength were to be deployed south. He apparently told her: "If we pussyfoot in our actions and do not achieve complete success, in another few months we shall be living in

a different country whose word counts for little."

His clarity, confidence and the potency of his words seemed designed to chime with Thatcher's character. She was impressed. She was convinced. Sidelining more doubtful voices, she gave the order, and within hours the greatest military endeavor Britain had undertaken for decades was under way.

It was as if Henry Leach's entire naval career had prepared him for this moment.

He had served his nation since arriving at Dartmouth as a cadet in 1937.

He was in Singapore in December 1941, serving in the plotting room when news of the sinking of the Prince of Wales came in. Two days before he had enjoyed a gin sling and a swim with the battleship's commanding officer: his father, Capt John Leach, who was killed in the disaster.

The young Leach possessed traits in battle for which the Royal Navy is renowned: skill, calm resolve, patience, ruthlessness when required, humility and, in the words of Nelson, "humanity after victory".

Despite this rather jolly gathering of A Turret's men for the photographer, there was more relief aboard the battleship and above all weariness after an exacting battle in near total darkness and unforgiving seas.

Those traits – and the determination to act at the crucial moment – have cemented Henry Leach's reputation as one of the most beloved leaders in the Royal Navy's recent history.

By many he is still regarded as the 'saviour of the Navy'. Two decades after his finest hour, a grateful RN showed its gratitude by naming its new headquarters in Portsmouth for him.

■ THIS photograph (A 21168) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



Picking up the gauntlet

THERE are four Britons, two Pakistanis and two Americans.

What a fine example of international naval co-operation.

In the middle of the Gulf, Allied mine warfare forces join up for Arabian Gauntlet 11 – a Royal-Navy led test of the ability of divergent ships to work together to deal with a potential mine menace in the heat of the Gulf (where it's now in the mid-30s Celsius – over 90°F).

Your cast for Arabian Gauntlet were mother ship RFA Lyme Bay, two Sandowns (HM Ships Grimsby and Pembroke), one Hunt (Chiddingfold), one US Avenger-class minehunter (USS Gladiator), one very large USS minehunting helicopter (a Sea Dragon from the 'Blackhawks' – HM-15) and two Pakistani (PNS Munsif and Muhafiz).

The UK Maritime Battle Staff used Lyme Bay – officially a landing support ship, but she's being employed in the Gulf as a support vessel for Britain's four Bahrain-based minehunters (Middleton, No.4 in the quartet wasn't partaking in this exercise) – as their base to choreograph a number of training serials and tests.

Following a joint departure from Bahrain, Pembroke led the minehunters in some co-ordinated gunnery.

After that there was some core business (ie minehunting) with a sustained hunt in challenging temperatures and a less-than-benign sea state.

The weather did not stop Pembroke launching her Seafox robot submersible to track down several exercise mines, while her clearance divers also took to the murky waters of the Gulf to do the same.

"Exercising with so many different countries has really given us the chance to further our skills and gain a useful insight into working with minehunters from other countries," said Lt Cdr Angus Essenhigh, Pembroke's CO.

Arabian Gauntlet drew to a close with the big guns joining in – Arleigh Burke destroyer USS

Higgins and Pakistan's brand-new frigate, PNS Saif.

Air and surface targets were successfully engaged by the bolstered force, demonstrating its ability to respond swiftly and effectively to a variety of threats.

It's the second major international exercise involving RN mine forces in the Gulf in the past few weeks.

Pembroke, Middleton, plus Lyme Bay joined the final stages of Inas Bahr (Friendly Seas) which saw one of NATO's two minehunting forces (Group 2 – Group 1 is dealing with Gaddafi's mine threat off Libya) leave the Med and make a rare foray into the Gulf.

As with Arabian Gauntlet, the aim was to test the abilities of ships from numerous nations – Greece, Turkey, Germany, Spain, Italy, France and the USA, plus the British contingent – to hunt mines together.

In this instance, there was a great deal of knowledge which the Brits could pass on to the visiting force.

RN minehunters have built up a wealth of experience thanks to their near-constant presence in the uniquely-challenging waters of the Gulf over the past decade.

It certainly rubbed off, according to the NATO task group commander, Capt Georgios Pelekanakis.

"Exercising with ships and crews with a long experience of working in these waters made this extremely useful," he said.

"We also made a good show of ourselves and demonstrated that we are indeed able to operate at strategic distance."

That 'strategic distance' was aided to some degree by Lyme Bay which provided the NATO vessels with fuel and supplies – something she does for Royal Navy mine vessels on a regular basis.

With the arrival of the international force there was the chance to practise replenishments with different vessels – and on a much larger scale.



● (Foreground to background) PNS Munsif, HMS Chiddingfold, HMS Grimsby, HMS Pembroke, PNS Muhafiz and USS Gladiator with a Sea Dragon from HM-15 overhead. Picture: MC1 Lynn Friant, USN

Blyth spirit of the night

THIS is not a piece of modern art, but the trail left by tracer from the guns of HMS Blyth as the minehunter prepared for a punishing deployment.

Five weeks of intensive training were just what the doctor ordered for the Sandown's crew as they prepared for the Gulf.

We say 'doctor' but really we mean 'Flag Officer Sea Training' as the Navy's ultimate 'MOT organisation' readied Blyth's crew for their seven months in charge of HMS Pembroke which is currently in Bahrain (rotation of the ship's companies allows for a constant RN minehunter presence in the region).

Although FOST for small ships is a shorter experience than larger vessels (five weeks not eight or nine), many of the tests and scenarios are identical: stem flooding, fight fires, fend off fast attack craft, jets, helicopters, deal with the media (although some of the sailors do struggle with the constant disputes between Brownia and Mustardia, the fictitious states at the heart of the FOST scenario). And being a minehunter there are some bespoke tests locating and blowing up mines.

The FOSTies assess the competency of the Blyth team as a whole, but for some members of the ship's company there's one-on-one assessment, such as navigator S/Lt Martyn Mayger.

"As a first-job navigator, operational sea

training's a daunting prospect," he said. "Human nature tends to take over and you assume that the FOSTies will arrive onboard with the sole objective of placing you under extreme pressure."

"It was a pleasant surprise to learn – very quickly – that actually their focus is purely on identifying your shortcomings and giving encouragement and advice on how to improve."


"The standard of teaching was brilliant. With a bit of determination and personal effort, I'm sure the lessons they taught me will make me a better navigator."

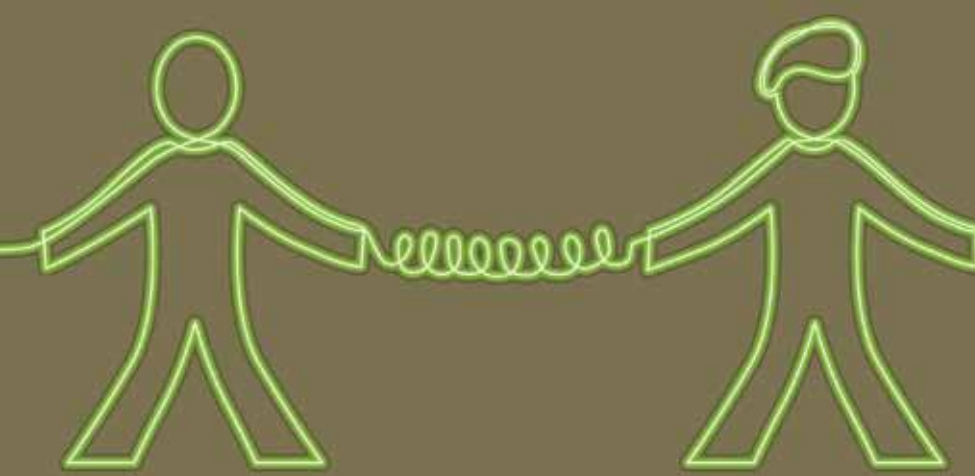
Although the ship's company will take over a sister ship, there is a tinge of sadness at leaving Blyth behind. They have brought her out of refit at Rosyth at the end of last year and breathed fresh life into her. There is little time for 'mourning', however, as thoughts turn to the Gulf: the keys for Blyth are handed over at the end of May, those for Pembroke are collected in early June.

"The period of training has put the right amount of pressure – with support – on my team to prepare us fully for an operational theatre," said Lt Cdr Rich Hutchings, Blyth's CO.

"Given the uncertainty of current climes – and the recently-publicised mine clearance operations off Libya by HMS Brocklesby – the training is totally realistic and covers the full spectrum of tasks that we could be called upon to do."







Keeping you in touch

WelComE (Welfare Communications Everywhere) – providing communication services to link entitled UK military personnel on operational duty with their families and friends back home.

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'Nothing s

THANK you very much, NATO.

It's because of them that I'm in the Control Room of HMS Tireless at 3.45 on a Sunday morning, awake in body if not necessarily in spirit.

The nature of Allied submarine operations means that the hunter-killer has been given an invisible 'box' – 100 miles long, 20 miles wide – in which to dive after passing through the Strait of Gibraltar on the surface.

The box 'opens' at 4.14am. Thirty seconds after the deadline, 5,500 tonnes of sleek black messenger of death begins her descent – the last she will make after more than 300 days away from home.

If you're expecting something *Das Boot*-y, forget it.

There's no bearded bloke yelling "Alarm" on the bridge before hurriedly sliding down into the control room.

For a start the trip to the bridge is a dog-legged affair – three ladders winding their way down from the top of the fin.

For another, diving's a slow process. No crash diving these days. It takes a good hour to prepare *Tireless* for her descent – removing or retracting various pieces of communications equipment, radar and the like.

The stern vents open and the boat begins to tip gently, before another series of round red indicator lights flash on and the bow vents follow suit.

Red's the only light at this hour; it's still before dawn off the gateway to the Mediterranean and bright lights will severely affect the vision of the crew.

They, of course, haven't just risen. They've been up since a little after midnight ready for the latest watch change, the first of four of the day, at 1am.

As the boat descends there's the constant 'click click click' of the depth metre as it cycles through every ten centimetres until the rate of clicking slows and the boat reaches 60 metres.

Back to bed.

But not for the 60 or so souls currently on watch.

They've had ten months of it.



On Wednesday May 11 HMS *Tireless* returned to Devonport after the longest submarine deployment in a decade. **Richard Hargreaves** joined the boat for the final four of her 307 days away.

Just four days to go.

Rewind those ten months and it takes you to Friday July 9 2010.

That's before the World Cup final (although after England's inglorious exit), before the royal engagement (let alone the wedding), before the Defence Review, before the Ashes, before the Arab spring, before the Japanese tsunami, before Bin Laden was killed.

It's not just major events that the boat's missed – it's how they've happened.

News is restricted to a dot-matrix print out – a mix of global political events, hard news from the UK, a bit of sport. No celebrity tittle-tattle.

But the crew have no concept of the outpouring of celebration for the royal wedding, the violence of the revolution in Egypt, the scale of the devastation in Japan – there are no photographs, no moving images. A couple of hundred words written in a typewriter font with minimal punctuation don't do the events justice.

"You really miss real news, real newspapers, pictures. I had no idea what Kate Middleton looked like until I saw the royal wedding on TV in Crete," says Navigator Lt John Cursiter.

And they have little idea of what's been going on in Libya – although they do know that their sister boat *Triumph* played a brief, but key, role launching her Tomahawk missiles at government targets.

Triumph returned to Devonport with the Jolly Roger flying and not a little publicity. *Tireless* returned to a warm welcome from families. No submariner's battle ensign. Limited publicity (local rather than national media).

"Would I swap what we've

done for what *Triumph* did? Not a chance," says *Tireless*' youthful Executive Officer Lt Cdr Dan Knight. "Something like Libya is the public face of the Submarine Service and although I am disappointed that *Tireless* wasn't part of that operation, Tomahawk is only one aspect of what we do."

SO what has *Tireless* done?

Well, we can't really tell you. She's spent 120 days gathering intelligence – a lot of listening to chatter and the like between various groups of pirates, smugglers, drug runners and other criminals east of Suez.

"We're not allowed to say what we've done for 50 per cent of the time away, or where we've been – there's no point letting the cat out of the bag. That would surrender the stealth of a submarine," *Tireless*' Commanding Officer Cdr Jason Clay explains.

"I can tell you that the deployment has been a success. A lot of what we've done has been just as important as what's been making the headlines, but quite rightly we have to keep it under wraps."

The commanding officer is one of four men aboard to have completed every one of *Tireless*' days on deployment – crew rotation means that most crew have 'only' done six or so months at sea.

For the majority of the 130 souls aboard, the routine's six hours on, six hours off. There's no Sunday routine on board – no lie-ins, no slackening of the pace. Every day it's the same.

And as for those 12 hours' down time in every 24, it's not just sleeping: you have to squeeze in eating, washing, admin, a bit of PT, maybe send an e-mail home. As a rule, you

pictures: la(photo) shaun barlow, frpu west, and lt cdr mark harrison, po(et) joe joiner and et(me) bungy williams, hms tireless





short of exemplary'

won't get more than four and a half hours sleep in any one go.

And the routines – 7am-1pm, 1pm-7pm, 7pm-1am, 1am-7am – make for sharp contrasts with skimmer world.

Change of watch means the boat is buzzing at 12.30am as the oncoming watch wash and dress. Most of skimmerland is fast asleep.

You'll hear grunts and groans in the small hours as one of the crew pulls away on the rowing machine, squeezed between banks of computer processors.

There is no gym *per se* aboard Tireless. What little 'dead space' exists is filled with rowing or cycling machines, even a punchbag. There's no running machine (there's no compartment high enough).

And you are going to want to work out during your ten months away, for you are very amply fed. A team of three chefs, led by LCH Mark Hamilton provide three meals a day for a mere £2.40.

For the chefs there's the possibility of a lie-in – or at least more than six hours' sleep – as they work 12 hours on/off.

But those 12 hours on are 12 hours on their feet. Overnight it's preparations, baking bread, by day there's lunch and evening meal to prepare. And a few treats in between.

"If you've been on a long patrol of four or six weeks and the lads are a bit down, the boat needs a pick-up," says Mark.

Enter plates crammed with fresh donuts or flapjacks. "You don't even have to eat them – the smell can be enough. It goes through the entire boat."

Curry, pizza and steak are also winners. Crew make a point of walking past the galley after scan to give thumbs up or pass on their thanks.

If what Mark and his shipmates cook doesn't go down well with the lads – marmalade and orange crumble won't be a dessert that's repeated – it goes down Peter the Eater, the waste disposal machine.

Mark doesn't like switching it on. There's professional pride, of course, but the machine's noisy: you have to get 'Permission for Peter'. (He's not to be confused with Harry the Hydrosounder or George the Autopilot...).

YOU don't want loud noises on a boat.

Loud noise gives your position away to the enemy. There are posters throughout Tireless urging crew to remain quiet – one David Cameron admonishes Tireless' crew not to stomp on the ladders, for example.

The design of the boat and those Space Shuttle-esque black tiles covering it are designed to minimise outgoing sound; the tiles also absorb incoming sound – sonar possibly searching for Tireless.

As a hunter killer, it's the boat's first duty to hunt (and if necessary kill) potential threats.

You have to find them first – and for that you need sonar.

Radar is pretty self evident. Blob in the centre is you, blips around are contacts.

But sonar has always appeared baffling: a daunting green 'waterfall' display.

The reason it's not circular, like radar, is that the forward-facing sonar only covers two-thirds of the water around the boat: 120° either side of the bow.

The thick green bands between the fuzz on the screen are the contacts – shipping, submarines, even aircraft.

It's down to the sonar operators to identify the bands. There are some thick (and very classified) volumes, a sort of *Encyclopaedia Nauticalia*, which can help.

But most of the time an experienced hand like PO Robbie Roberts uses what's in his head: he can count the number of propeller blades thrashing away and, even more impressively, he can count the number of revolutions per minute (up to the mid 300s...).

"Nothing sounds the same in the ocean," Robbie explains. "If there's a beat there, that's the difference."

Apart from being able to count blades and revolutions, the senior rate can also distinguish between dolphins and porpoises. [David Attenborough mode on] The former sound happy, porpoises sad, apparently. [David Attenborough mode off.]

The days when merchantmen (noisy) used to be easily distinguishable from warships (not noisy) are going; the former

are becoming more modern, more efficient, quieter. Warships are generally driven by two screws with five blades per propeller.

The jewel in the crown – and the boat's *raison d'être* now as it was when it was built 25 years ago – is finding another submarine.

"In the middle of the static you'll hear a clink or a tingly noise. If they change depth, then it sounds like a budgie chirping," explains Robbie.

"If you're tracking another boat, you're buzzing. The hours pass just like that. It doesn't get any better – that's what we train for."

JUST in case the sonar team does pick up another boat, there's always a tube loaded with a £1.8m Spearfish torpedo.

At the operator's console in the control room – the submarine's counterpart to an ops room – you'll hear a couple of hisses audible over the headphones.

He has provided Spearfish with all the information the torpedo requires – the target (surface/submarine), speed, bearing, the depth to run, the course to take. It takes a series of click and point menus to input all this, turn the Safe to Fire switch, press the big red shiny button (Fire Push), which kindly flashes to tell you the torpedo's in the process of leaving the tube.

This too isn't like *Das Boot*. You are waiting to hear an explosion, of course – but you're also constantly providing Spearfish with fresh information about its target courtesy of a narrow cable or wire. If the computer can't 'talk' to the torpedo via the wire, that's an indicator that it's hit (the sonar chaps should also pick up a rather loud bang...)

Spearfish leaves one of five tubes in the weapon stowage compartment (more commonly the 'bomb shop'), thrust out syringe-like with a blast of water inserted into the back of the tube.

Spearfish leaves not so much with a bang or a whoosh as a couple of loud hisses (the pressure in the bomb shop makes the ears pop).

The noise is enough to stir the three lads sleeping down here – the empty torpedo racks have been turned into makeshift bunks for trainee members of the ship's company.

Their personal effects are either squeezed into the handful of lockers, or there's a myriad of shirts and towels hanging up on an *ad hoc* washing line. Every inch of space on Tireless is used.

Warships by their nature are a shrunken world – a small town squeezed into several hundred feet of steel.

On a boat, that shrinkage is taken to the extreme. None of the messes can accommodate all their members at one go, heads are half-size (a note on one helpfully explains they're designed for a family caravan), there are few showers which must be used sparingly (the tap on for perhaps 40 seconds in a couple of bursts), there's no room for a sick bay, nor most of the time for a chaplain (and most definitely not a church organ).

The chaplaincy e-mails a service for one of the ship's company to lead, music comes courtesy of 'karaoke hymns' on CD, and the church is one of the living spaces aboard: today the junior rates' mess, where besides the CD the soundtrack is provided by the soft drink machine stirring the juice.

There are beds for only 100 of the 130 souls on board (and what bunks there are, are 6ft 3in long, 2ft wide, 22in high); they're stacked three deep and plunged into darkness for most of the time. Oh and part of every bunk space is eaten up by your breathing mask.

Aside from 'water in the people tank', nothing troubles a submariner more than fire. It's difficult to tackle on a surface ship. It's even trickier to deal with in a boat, lumbering around in farnought suits and breathing masks in a much more restrictive environment.

And while fire in a ship is an emergency normally limited to a few sailors in the damage control parties, on a boat everyone's wearing breathing masks – plugged into an emergency breathing air system which covers every inch of Tireless.

Past experience has taught

submariners that smoke very rapidly passes through a boat, irrespective of the source of the fire. It also makes it sound like a meeting of the Darth Vader fan club...

While routines are demanding and conditions cramped for all aboard, it's the marine engineers who really earn their crust.

Roughly half the ship's company are 'back afties' (because they work back aft – the reactor compartment and 'tunnel' effectively separate the forward section from the engine room).

In manoeuvring – the reactor control centre – it's a 'mere' 32°C; in the bowels of the lower level engine room, it can get up to the high 50s.

At that ambient temperature, the ladders are hot to touch, huge blobs of condensation drop on you and as for the sweat...

And the heat's about to get worse.

Time for a reactor 'scram', simulating a failure by switching it off and running briefly on battery power.

Now there are things associated with nuclear reactors you don't want to hear or see. Bells, horns, whistles, lots of red flashing lights...

...which is exactly what happened when the thing scrambled.

Back-up systems immediately kick in, but with battery power limited, only the bare necessities receive 'juice'. Lights dim, systems close down, speed drops to a handful of knots and off goes the air-con.

And up goes the temperature in the engine room as the stokers try to sort out the problem. It can nudge 60°C – the official term, for such heat, explains WO2 Simon Fell, is "absolute hell – horrible." Luckily, he and his engineering shipmates receive aptly-titled sweat pay.

It's so hot down here you can – and the men do – bake a potato on the throttle. A bit of butter/cheese/chilli, the perfect midnight snack...

The engineers spend around 80 hours a week down here – not continuously, of course. Shifts last three or four hours, but every 30 or so minutes on

watch, the stoker down here has to take a break (and a drink) to escape the heat. If he gets caught short, there's a urinal just outside manoeuvring.

From too much information to too little...

While the skimmer world enjoys almost constant e-mail and internet access, not so the deeps. But at least the T-boats have e-mail now – available only at periscope depth, if the operation allows it – to keep in touch with home. As for the internet, best to wait till you're alongside to do that Google search. Imagine dial-up from a decade ago, then make it ten times slower...

And if comms are limited, you can always create your own. A signal 'arrived' for the senior rates allocating them a hotel in the emirate of Sharjah during one port visit to the United Arab Emirates. Sharjah's a dry emirate. Good job it was a spoof. Oh how they laughed...

There are other distractions from the day-to-day routine: quiz night on Mondays, the occasional horse racing night, a raffle, football pools, the ubiquitous laptops and games machines (the CO's even been known to join in multiplayer *Call of Duty*...).

Such things keep morale high and, says Cdr Clay, make his job that much easier. "The crew's performance has been absolutely first class throughout. Their enthusiasm, good humour and in particular, their stoicism in the face of a lengthy deployment have been nothing short of exemplary."

"They deserve full credit for what they've achieved, they've made a difficult task look relatively easy."

"For me, the deployment represents the pinnacle of my sea going career to date, the best job by far, we've had a cracking time."

We'll leave the last word to WO2 Fell. Despite spending much of his time "in absolute hell", he wouldn't swap his job for the world.

"I love the people I work with – I'll never find a better bunch. A lot of the time aboard it's just fun."



● URNU sailors pay their respects to First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope and other senior Naval officers on board HMS Puncher during a recent large-scale First Patrol Boat Squadron exercise in the Solent

Picture: LA(Phot) Arron Hoare



Standard routines, just a bit less ship

DESPITE being in the Royal Naval Reserve some time my naval career has been decidedly shore-based, *writes O/C Adam Kendry RNR, of HMS President.*

So I got in contact with Lt Lee Vessey at London University RN Unit (URNU) about coming out one weekend with his unit aboard Archer-class patrol boat HMS Puncher.

He agreed, and I joined a party of seven others (two from Oxford URNU) to travel down to Portsmouth for my first weekend at sea...

We arrived at the ship on Friday – perfectly timed to have scrum, but not to have to play any part in preparing it!

This was perhaps just as well, as my involvement in food preparation mishaps would cast an ominous – and literal – cloud over the events of the next day.

For the first night there was just time to get settled in and arrange watches for the next few days.

Those on duty changed into uniform, whilst those not on duty braved the Pompey nightlife of the Ship and Castle.

Needless to say a good time was had by all and we returned to the ship in good time to get our heads down for the long day ahead.

There are few shocks as unwelcome as the Call the Hands and one never really gets used to it.

The attempt by all in the cabin to dismiss the pipe as a collective delusion was unsuccessful and the morning waltz of stumbling matelots dancing around each other looking for items of kit and trying to shave commenced.

Breakfast was wolfed down speedily, before all got involved in cleaning the ship and making her good for getting under way.

Kirkie the Navs' Yeoman took us all up on to the upper deck and took us through the basic rope and fender work that we would need to know when mooring and unmooring. We then divided into different working parties.

I stayed up at the fo'c'sle to work on the casting-off procedure with the WEO and put my new knowledge into practice.

The sea state on Saturday was great and the sun was shining – it was pure pleasure as we got to work casting off and the other cadets busied themselves in my task.

It really struck me how accurate the RN motto of 'the team works' was.

Everyone on the ship had a function to perform, and without it the ship would not function. It was essential to trust your

shipmates to do their job.

Inexperienced as most of us were, it was especially important to listen and pay heed to what the crew were saying at all times.

The previous night's watches had prepared our charts and we spent the next few hours rotating stations about the ship.

Everyone had the opportunity to spend some time on the bridge, either as Quartermaster (a skill, I soon discovered, that takes some practice!) or as Officer of the Day.

The Commanding Officer spent a lot of time taking us through navigation and sequence of orders.

The learning curve was steep, but it was rewarding to note one's progress over the weekend.

We took the ship along the coast and began a series of exercises, most notably a man overboard drill.

Dazzling sunlight reflecting off the water made this difficult, and it was interesting to realise that good weather, as well as bad, has its own difficulties.

By now we were developing some sea sense and spent the rest of the afternoon being taken through emergency procedures by the ship's crew.

A simulated fire exercise



● HMS Puncher on training duties in the Solent

provided an energetic conclusion to our afternoon before we set off back to Portsmouth.

The fire drill was to prove invaluable as I set about cooking dinner ('prepping scrum') for 13 people.

Within the first 20 seconds of preparation I had set off nearly every fire alarm on the ship.

Fortunately, there was smoke without fire in this case.

Unfortunately, I had just lived down this humiliation when I managed to cut the power onboard by leaving the oven on too long.

Needless to say, I was the butt of much gentle ribbing on our run ashore at Gunwharf Quays that evening...

Sunday was a quieter day.

The weather had turned foul and it wasn't safe to take the ship out as we had planned. There was still plenty to do though.

The change in plan necessitated

alteration of the chartwork and some of the cadets flung themselves into that whilst I led the colour party through Morning Colours.

Afterwards we all assembled on the flying bridge.

Even though our new plan was simply to sail out to the edge of the harbour and then turn about and return to our home berth, it was still necessary to go through the full Leaving and Entering Harbour Briefs.

We then busied ourselves in a repeat of yesterday morning's activity – except this time we had all swapped duties and it was pouring with rain.

I was attached to the ceremonial party on the flying bridge and the Executive Officer took us through the procedure and ensured that increasingly-sudden respects were shown to all of HM Ships in port.

Returning to our berth, it was time for scrum before a final Clean

Ship.

We then marched over to HMS Westminster for an Access All Areas tour from a member of the ship's company.

Despite her much greater size, it was curious to note how similar in many ways the routine on board the frigate was to Puncher, and therefore how valuable experience on a P2000 can be.

They may be small, but the systems and procedures we learnt on our training weekend are transferable to any of HM Ships.

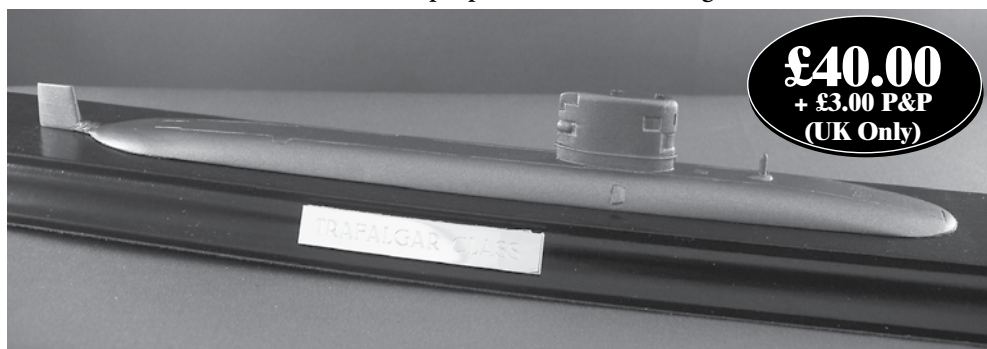
As we drove back to London, I mused that I had probably learnt more about the Navy in two days at sea than in two months of shore-based activity.

I would encourage everyone to take up any opportunity for such a weekend as often as they can.

I will certainly be back, although I suspect I might not be given galley duties next time...

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● HMS Puncher (foreground) follows HMS Biter (P270) and HMS Explorer during the recent First Patrol Boat Squadron exercise in the Solent

Picture: LA(Phot) Arron Hoare



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*Information correct at 01/05/11. Aircraft participation subject to operational commitments and serviceability. The organisers reserve the right to vary or cancel any part of the event at any time and cannot be held liable for variations in the content of the flying display.

ACTION PACKED DAY OUT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

Navy joins in the wedding jamboree

THE groom might have been an RAF officer (in the uniform of the Irish Guards).

RAF musicians may have serenaded Prince William and Catherine Middleton at the ceremony in Westminster Abbey.

The flypast may have been RAF, the various guards and escorts drawn from elements of the Army.

But the Senior Service still got a look-in at the Royal Wedding – and celebrated in style in parties and events around the units and establishments.

Of course the father of the groom, and his uncle, were resplendent in Naval uniform – the Prince of Wales is an admiral, while the Duke of York is a rear admiral.

Over at a Naval nursery in Plymouth, young Thomas couldn't muster a young for his big day, but 'bride' Anaea didn't seem that bothered.

The happy couple attend the Little Tugs Nursery at Plympton, and were hitched by 'vicar' Kyle while 'best man' Dylan and 'bridesmaid' Alisha-Jay played their part in the service.

Meanwhile, 150 members of Naval families on a married quarters estate in Plymouth also celebrated – and raised a tidy sum for charity at the same time.

The residents of Pearn Gardens and Pearn Road put in plenty of planning to ensure that the day would be a success, prompting one of the organisers, CPO Tony Buckley (HMS Collingwood), to observe "how refreshing it was to see the traditional values of community spirit and neighbourliness can be relied upon amongst Service families."

And the families' fundraising yielded £320 for the RBL.

Bristol's Reservist unit HMS Flying Fox also went the extra mile to make the wedding day a memorable occasion.

Service members gathered mid-morning in their full military dress uniforms, while civilians wore appropriate wedding guest attire.

All watched proceedings in London on big screens, after which the Flying Fox party gathered for



a formal wedding photo.

The happy couple's future was toasted with champagne before all sat down to a wedding breakfast.

Lt Cdr Oz Rhodes, Flying Fox's Executive Officer, said: "This is a great day for our country, and a great day for William and Kate."

"The whole of HMS Flying Fox, its families and friends from across the west of England send our very best wishes to the happy couple on their big day."

Returning to the ceremony in London, eight RN personnel were amongst the 24 who lined the path outside the Great West Door of the Abbey as the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge left for Buckingham Palace, all chosen because they have a personal connection to Prince William, or because of the outstanding contribution they have given to their Service.

They were Lt Steve Clarke (HMS Vanguard), Lt John Crow (40 Cdo RM), Lt Jason Hannigan (Daring), CPO Sharon Cummins (Wildfire), Sgt 'Bernie' Manning (40 Cdo RM), LPT Gavin Rees (RNLA), AB Dennis Brown (Wildfire) and AB Eldon Hughes (Astute).

LPT Rees was Prince William's

Clubz on HMS Iron Duke in 2008, and said: "My abiding memory of Prince William was that he was always late for circuit training, so I always had to give him extra press ups."

"Looking back on it now it's amazing to think that I took the future king for circuit training."

He added that Prince William was "a really genuine bloke who got on with everyone and was great fun."

Prince William and his bride-to-be contacted First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope to pass on their thanks to members of the Royal Navy and RN Civil Service for the messages of congratulations and kind wishes.

Amongst the other units providing street liners were HM Ships Astute, Campbeltown, Chatham, Cumberland, Daring, Dauntless, Diamond, Edinburgh, Gloucester, Illustrious, Liverpool, Monmouth, Montrose, Neptune, Northumberland, Vanguard, York, RNAS Culdrose, RNAS Yeovilton, Fleet HQ and DES, Bristol.

The RM Band Collingwood was stationed in Parliament Square, and RN photographers helped record the event for posterity.



● A classic shot of the newly-married Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, taken by RN photographer PO(Phot) Amanda Reynolds. Thomas and Anaea stage their own version of the wedding at the Little Tugs Nursery at Plympton (left) and the residents of Pearn Gardens and Pearn Road in Plymouth celebrate (below)



Rescue team meets rescue team



A ROYAL Marines pilot has been reunited with his former mountain rescue colleagues after bad weather caused a missed appointment.

Maj Mike Devereux RM is the second-in-command at HMS Gannet, based at Prestwick in Scotland.

The search and rescue pilot was due to make a training-flight visit to his former colleagues of the Langdale Ambleside Mountain Rescue Team (LAMRT) in January until thick fog blanketed the airfield.

With Scotland and the North of England basking in warm spring sunshine, the training flight was rescheduled, and Mike got the chance to catch up with his old friends in the Lake District.

And one hapless climber also benefited from the visit – while airborne in the Lakes, an emergency call diverted Rescue 177 to nearby Kirkfell.

The red and grey Sea King took just three minutes to locate the climber, stuck on a ledge with a 200ft drop below him, and he was plucked to safety by duty aircrewman POWiggyWigfull and placed on a path.

"It's one of the quickest jobs I think we've ever done," said Mike. "It lasted only about 15 minutes from start to finish."

Mike then returned to the training day with LAMRT, with whom he served as a volunteer between 1992-95 while he underwent teacher training at Lancaster University's Lake



● Maj Mike Devereux RM (right) receives a copy of a book and DVD about the Langdale Ambleside Mountain Rescue Team from its training officer, Phil Taylor

District campus in Ambleside.

Many of Mike's colleagues from 16 years ago are still with the team.

"I have great memories of my time in the mountain rescue team and really enjoyed catching up with some of my colleagues there," said Mike.

"Joining LAMRT all those years ago came about as I had a passion for mountain climbing and by being part of the mountain rescue team I was also able to give something back."

Mike eventually moved away from the area with his new job – but his current posting means their paths crossed again.

"As a search and rescue pilot,

I now frequently work and train with mountain rescue teams around Scotland and Northern England.

"The work which is done by these extremely professional volunteer groups is outstanding and I am proud to have been part of that."

LAMRT last year celebrated its 40th anniversary and produced a book, *Light on the Fell*, and a DVD to mark the occasion.

Mike was presented with a copy of each as a memento of his time with the team by LAMRT's training officer Phil Taylor.

See next month's *Navy News* for a detailed look at the work of HMS Gannet

Wiggy is up for award

ROYAL Navy search and rescue winchman PO 'Wiggy' Wigfull has been nominated for an award on the back of his "exceptional" service record.

In 13 years of SAR flying – divided between Gannet, in Ayrshire (the country's busiest air rescue station), and Culdrose in Cornwall – Wiggy has attended more than 800 emergency call-outs, and has been credited with rescuing more than 620 people.

That put him in line for a *Daily Record* 'Our Heroes' award, the winners of which were due to be announced as *Navy News* went to press.

Wiggy (pictured left) said that he is part of a four-man duty crew, and that teamwork is a vital part of any mission, and added: "To me it's just my job and it's a job which I love, so to be nominated for an award like this is very humbling really."

Wiggy is also heavily involved in charity initiatives and community outreach projects.



Super Severn wins the cup

FIVE thousand Channel Islanders sampled life with the Cod Squad when they visited HMS Severn at the Jersey Boat Show.

An estimated one in three Jersey inhabitants attended the three-day show... and one in six of those toured Severn... so we can assume (using the *Navy News* team's limited mathematical skills) that approximately one in every 18 Jerseymen experienced the fishery patrol ship, which is not a bad 'hit' ratio at all.

Severn took a break from her near-constant patrols of UK waters keeping tabs of fishermen to attend the three-day show in St Helier.

There she was joined by around 60 vessels from tugs and small pleasure cruisers to top-of-the-range Sunseeker yachts, and another one of Her Majesty's warships, Bristol's university boat HMS Raider.

"With the exciting opportunity to operate one of the ship's fire hoses and aim the 20mm gun, how could the public resist?" said Lt Oli Ayers, Severn's navigator.

"Fine weather for the majority of the event also meant the upper deck made a perfect viewpoint for the harbour and other boat show attractions."

While in Jersey the ship hosted an official reception for island officials and boat show exhibitors, held guided tours for members of the Prince's Trust, prize winners from the boat show, local firefighters and Mr and Miss St Helier.

Severn also welcomed aboard Vice Admiral Sir Tim McClement, former Deputy Commander in Chief Fleet and now CEO Flagship Superyacht Academy, and Cdre Jamie Miller, the RN's Regional Commander for Wales and West of England.

All well and good, but for the Severns the highlight of the visit to St Helier was the presentation of the Jersey Cup – the most coveted award in the Fishery Protection world.

The trophy dates back to the wartime destroyer HMS Jersey and a magnificent £20,000 solid silver trophy donated to the ship by islanders.

The ship was sunk in the Mediterranean but the cup survived and subsequently ended up on the next HMS Jersey, a fishery patrol boat.

When she was sold to Pakistan in the mid-90s, the cup was kept, since when it's been presented to the most effective fishery protection ship...

...which over the past 12 months was HMS Severn.

The ship steamed 40,135 nautical miles (just shy of twice round the world), carried out 325 boardings (roughly one per day on patrol), reminded 161 vessels of the fishing regulations, issued a dozen official warnings and detained seven boats for transgressions. Much of that was captured by TV crews from the documentary series *Sea Patrol*.

Lieutenant Governor of Jersey Lieutenant General Andrew Ridgway formally presented the cup to Severn's CO Lt Cdr Catherine Jordan.

As well as the Jersey Cup, Severn was also awarded the Fleet Efficiency Pennant as the most hard-working and effective patrol boat in the RN.

Mary Rose boldly goes

THERE was a bit of Henry VIII's flagship orbiting the globe last month as a 3in wooden ball travelled into space with the shuttle Endeavour.

Endeavour – on its final mission and the penultimate flight of the entire shuttle programme – carried the 'parrel', once used to raise the sails on Mary Rose, upholding a 50-year tradition of manned space flight.

Since the earliest missions, astronauts have carried historical objects aloft for inspiration.

The ball was presented when shuttle astronauts visited Portsmouth last summer. It's one of nearly 20,000 objects recovered from the Solent sea bed from the wreck of the onetime flagship.

Sundowners down south

AREN'T sundowners cocktails drunk somewhere exotic by scantily-clad chaps and chapesses at dusk?

Here, it's a cup of char downed by very-heavily-clad chaps and chapesses at dusk.

Still, by the dictionary definition ("a distant foreign country"), it is at least exotic.

With temperatures barely above freezing, the ship's company of HMS York gather on the destroyer's flight deck off the island paradise of South Georgia (7,500 miles from the Type 42's home of Portsmouth).

After several weeks patrolling around the Falklands, Britain's fastest destroyer (34kts flat out) left East Cove port and struck out into the expanses of the South Atlantic for the four-day voyage to Grytviken, the 'capital' of the remote island.

The warship topped up with fuel from RFA Black Rover for possibly the last time – the tanker's bound for South Africa to undergo some maintenance – then made a bee-line for King Edward Point, with the bridge team on the lookout for bergs as the ship neared South Georgia.

Aboard for the passage were soldiers from the Coldstream Guards, the current Roulement Infantry Company in the Falklands, plus the islands' Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team and Cdr Adam Gosling, the son of the destroyer's sponsor, Lady Gosling.

Once anchored off Grytviken, the sailors were able to get ashore to tour the abandoned whaling station, visit the museum, meet the wildlife (chiefly South Georgia's penguin and sea lion and seal populations – although the latter weren't too keen on the matelots and invariably chased them away), and buy numerous postcards and



souvenir stamps from the island's post office (which doesn't get too much passing trade).

After a couple of days in the sheltered waters off Grytviken, York departed for a tour of the islands to take in the magnificent Nordenskjold glacier and Drygalski Fjord in the south of the island, plus the impressive natural harbours of Stromness, Leith and Gold on the east coast, before returning to the capital for a church service and penguin racing night on the flight deck to raise £800 for HMS York's charities.

On the return journey to the Falklands York paused over the last resting place of HMS Sheffield, lost some 95 miles off the islands in May 1982 several

days after being struck by an Argentine Exocet missile which claimed the lives of 20 men. A memorial service was carried out for the Shiny Sheffs, led by York's chaplain, Rev Mark Alsopp.

Once back at East Cove, the ship received fresh supplies and stores, ready for a renewed spell at sea.

Those sailors who could be spared headed to Stanley for various adventurous activities such as bodyboarding and canoeing, or visited the battlefields around the Falklands capital, chiefly Mount Longdon, scene of fierce fighting between red berets and Argentine troops in June 1982.

When the sailors returned to their ship they found D98 ready for sea... plus 60 soldiers and airmen

keen to see what York can do from naval gunfire support to exercises with the islands' Typhoon fighters.

"The weather and sea state were unkind to our landlubber friends," said York's marine engineering officer Lt Cdr George Adams. "Several of them were feeling a bit green by the end of the day."

With autumn now in full force in the Southern Hemisphere, it's beginning to impact on the ship's movements – however fast she might be.

Gusts in excess of 60kts kept the ship pinned to the jetty at East Cove for several days before finally abating, allowing York to return to sea and make for San Carlos Water for 29th anniversary commemorations of the loss of HMS Ardent and Antelope.

Commandos practise their Swede torque

TWO Swedish fast attack craft have been loaned to the Royal Marines as the Navy looks at patrol boats of the future.

The first two of four Combat Boat 90s have been handed over to 1 Assault Group Royal Marines for several months of intensive trials.

The Royal Navy is looking at acquiring a new class of 'force protection craft' capable of fending off enemy fast boats and dealing with threats on land. As a secondary requirement, the future boats will be expected to carry up to eight Royal Marines ashore during amphibious operations.

The CB90 has been in service with Swedish and half a dozen other navies since the early 90s (hence the craft's name) and can carry up to 21 troops at speeds of around 40kts (46mph) – as well as mount machine-guns and grenade launchers.

There's nothing similar in the current Royal Navy or Royal Marines inventory, so the Royals are borrowing the Swedish craft to see what they can do and to incorporate what they learn into the design of the future fast boats.

1 AGRM's Commanding Officer, Col Rory Copinger-Symes said the UK and Swedish Armed Forces had built up good ties in the past decade, especially as Sweden had become "a much bigger player in amphibious warfare". The net result, he added, was that "we have a lot to learn from each other."

Experts from RM Instow will test fast navigation, force protection, working with assault ships and carrying commandos with the Swedish boats; in return the Royals are lending the Swedes some Offshore Raiding Craft – hence Col Ola Truedsson, head of Swedish 1st Marine Regiment proclaiming the loan "a win-win situation for both countries".



● LS(MW) John-Paul Taggart explains the Seafox mine disposal system to youngsters from Old Town First School and Nursery

Poole winners

THE good folk of Dorset welcomed HMS Cattistock with open arms when the minehunter visited her affiliated town of Poole.

As well as being bound with the hunt in the namesake village just outside Dorchester, the Portsmouth-based warship is also affiliated with the port and seaside town of Poole.

Over a weekend, the minehunter hosted one in every 35 Poolers – over 4,000 people in all – as she opened her gangway to visitors for nine hours while alongside at Town Quay, slap bang in the heart of town.

"The visitors were all extremely interested in the ship – and proud of what we do," said AB(D) Richard Stanley. "It was nice to see how highly the public value us."

This was the first chance for the ship's company to take Cattistock on a port visit – they've recently taken charge of the vessel in the latest rotation of Hunt-class crews.

Lt Cdr Adam Northover and his team laid on a demonstration for local movers and shakers to show what a minehunter can do, and stress the role of today's RN around the world (two of Cattistock's sisters, Chiddingfold and Middleton are committed in the Gulf right now), while local schools and Sea Cadets were also treated to a guided tour.

"The visit was an excellent

chance for the ship's company to build on the fantastic relationship we have with our affiliated town – and to highlight the vital role Royal Navy mine countermeasures vessels perform across the globe."

The few days in Poole coincided with the change of mayor ceremony with Cllr Chris Bulteel stepping down from the role and his colleague Cllr Graham Wilson assuming the chains of office.

The sailors were invited to the civic offices to witness proceedings and the official naming of the HMS Cattistock Room, where a large ship's badge and plaque now hang to honour the ties between the borough and ship.

Among the first duties for the new mayor was taking the salute in his capacity as Admiral of the Port of Poole alongside Lt Cdr Northover as the Band of HM Royal Marines performed *Beat Retreat*, watched by hundreds of locals.

All in all, said Lt Dave Starkey, Cattistock's acting second-in-command, the visit to Dorset was "an unmitigated success".

He continued: "I've not experienced such a warm welcome in a port in eight years in the Royal Navy. I can't wait to come back."

The ship sailed from Poole to resume her mine warfare training, currently being carried out in the Irish Sea.



London For Heroes

Experience and enjoy London's West End on a Haven For Heroes break at the Victory Services Club.

At Ease at the VSC

To demonstrate our support for British Personnel serving in Afghanistan and the Middle East*, on land, sea and in the air and to thank them for their commitment and bravery the VSC offers substantial discounts to those returning on R&R or post operational tour leave from those theatres. Below the "Haven for Hero" rates are shown against our standard price for a Memorial Wing Room.

*Iraq, Pakistan, Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Yemen and at sea in the Arabian Gulf

Room Type	Haven for Hero Rates	Standard Rates
Single ensuite per night	£32.50	£49.50
Double ensuite per night	£45.00	£94.00
Family ensuite per night	£65.00	£130.00

(Haven for Heroes eligibility is only for British Serving Armed Forces men & women who have served in these theatres within the past 6 months. A Letter of proof of Service in Theatre signed by the commanding officer is required on all bookings)

E: res@vsc.co.uk T: 020 7616 8335
www.vsc.co.uk/Haven-for-Heroes



MOD HQ wins top award

A NEW MOD headquarters building has won a prestigious prize at the Partnerships Bulletin Awards in London.

The Joint HQ building at Northwood in Middlesex was judged best operational project, beating seven other public private partnership (PPP) contenders to the highest accolade available to the Private Finance Initiative/PPP industry.

The judges particularly commended the way in which the project teams, from Carillion, Scott Brownrigg and the Northwood Development Project, had worked together in partnership to achieve their common aim.

The building is one part of a five-year redevelopment of the whole Northwood HQ site, and was officially opened by the Queen in May last year.

It is the new home to the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), which is responsible for all UK joint overseas military operations.

Cdr Simon Brown RN (retd), speaking for the whole team, said: "We are proud that on this sitewide project we have absolutely delivered all the requirements not only of PJHQ but also other units onsite including Commander (Operations), the Multinational HQ, HMS Wildfire and others."

Give to receive

SHIPS, units and establishments are being offered the chance to win one of eight £1,000 cash prizes for their welfare fund from the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC).

All they have to do is get people signed up to the Payroll Giving Scheme.

Whichever entrant gets the highest percentage of sign-ups wins – enter the first round of the competition before June 30 to stand a chance.

There are winners all round; for a minimum of £5 a month, which comes out of salaries before tax, individuals receive automatic sports insurance, and it helps the charity which could support Servicemen and women, their oppos and family through bereavement, injury and hard times.

As of April the leaderboard showed HMS Vigilant (Port) at the top, followed by Excellent, Daring, Victorious (Stbd), Bulwark and Iron Duke/814 NAS in joint sixth place.

For more details see your unit Payroll Giving Scheme representative or go to the charity website www.rnrmc.org.uk

Centre opened

THE Fleet Air Arm Museum's newly-redeveloped Swordfish Centre has officially re-opened.

Building work began last year with a refit of the conference area, where a new ceiling, lighting and floor were added.

Attention then turned to the restaurant, which has been completely refurbished.

The museum's policy of buying goods and services locally wherever possible means the new centre has been worked on by local builders and craftsmen.

Enigma exhibition is revealed

A NEW exhibition has opened at Bletchley Park commemorating the 70th anniversary of the capture of an Enigma machine and codebooks from U-110 on May 9 1941.

The exhibition features photos of the capture – the first time all known photos have been exhibited together at the same time – and the full story of the episode, including details from historian Hugh Sebag-Montefiore's bestselling book *Enigma: The Battle for the Code*.

There will also be accounts by participants, including survivors of the U-boat.

A special 70th anniversary edition of Hugh's book, updated to coincide with the exhibition, is available at Bletchley Park, which was once owned by Hugh's ancestors.

The seizure of codebooks from U-110 was crucial to cryptographers, as it allowed the naval Enigma code to be broken, giving the Allies a crucial

advantage in military operations, such as the sinking of the battle-cruiser Scharnhorst at North Cape in December 1943.

Two artefacts from leading Bletchley Park figures were due to be handed to the museum as *Navy News* went to press.

A hand-drawn Monopoly board, featuring properties carrying the names of Cambridge streets, was used in games by Alan Turing and created by William Newman.

And a silver tankard presented to William's father, Professor Max Newman – who led the Newmanry, a team which cracked the high-grade German Tunny cipher, and was Turing's friend and mentor – is also due to go on display shortly.

A memorial to mark the vital work of staff at the wartime home of the Government Code and Cypher School will be dedicated later this year at Bletchley Park.



● The front stone of the Frankton Memorial (above left); (left) AET Duncan Kiltie, of RNAS Culdrose, pays his respects at the memorial – his mother is the niece of Sgt Wallace, who died on the raid; (below) Angus Hasler (7), grandson of Maj (later Lt Col) 'Blondie' Hasler, admires the stone he helped unveil

Pictures: AB Will Haigh (HMS Shoreham)



Memorial agreed Arboretum opens late



uncle of the COPP Heroes Memorial Fund patron the Prince of Wales.

Robin Walton began the project when he read about a Russian Convoys memorial in this paper, and got in touch with COPP veteran Jim Booth through

another article.

Through Prince Charles, a 15-ton block of granite from the former Duchy estates in Cornwall has been offered to the fund for the centrepiece of the memorial – a gift from Liskeard stonemason Ian Piper.

Anniversary cheer

HMS WARRIOR has further reason to celebrate the 150th anniversary of her first commissioning.

The revolutionary ironclad, commissioned while still fitting out on the Thames on August 1 1861, has been accredited by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), indicating that it has met nationally-agreed standards for all UK museums over the way she is run, how the collection is looked after and the services provided for visitors.

Warrior is the third attraction on the Portsmouth site to receive accreditation, joining the Mary Rose Museum and the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

after the attack, and Mme Jeanne Baudray, as a young girl, was with a group of fishermen who fed the raiders.

Every one of the Cockleshell Heroes was represented by at least one family member.

Maj Hasler's widow Bridget, his son and daughter, and grandchildren were there, as was the daughter of Lt Dick Raikes, the CO of HMS Tuna.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope was one of the principal guests, and minehunter HMS Shoreham provided a uniformed guard and helpers.

The memorial, at the Pointe de Grave, was nurtured by Erick Poineau, the President of Frankton Souvenie, the Anglo-French group dedicated to perpetuating the memory of the raid.

It comprises four stones becoming progressively more upright, representing a force rising from the sea.

Clearer view of the sea

The Royal Navy will be helping to shed some light on the crucial role that the sea plays in the life of every British citizen.

Maritime charity Seafarers UK is co-ordinating Seafarers Awareness Week from June 6-12 in a bid to help cure the 'sea-blindness' that afflicts the nation.

And the Royal Navy will be playing its part to ensure the message is writ large that British trade and interests rely overwhelmingly on open sea lanes.

For example, some 95 per cent of UK trade is carried in ships – including vital sources of energy such as oil and gas, much of it through strategic 'choke points' such as the Gulf of Aden – and there are 14 British Overseas Territories to be protected.

Now in its third year, Seafarers Awareness Week is a nationwide communications campaign which will include the findings of research revealing how the role of sea-goers is overlooked by most Britons.

Seafarers UK has made a video showing how the UK would suffer if food, fuel and goods were not shipped in, and an interactive web TV show and radio interviews will support the initiative, as will print and social media messages.

Seafaring organisations will also be playing their part in the drive by producing their own promotional activities.

RN and RM units are being encouraged to use the week as a platform to highlight the relevance of the sea to their own community.

www.seafarersawarenessweek.org

Holland One is a legend

THE Royal Navy's iconic Holland One has joined a list of engineering legends such as the world's first railway locomotive and the Channel Tunnel.

The UK's first operational submarine has been awarded an Engineering Heritage Award by the Institute of Mechanical Engineers, recognising the boat's pivotal role in modernising the RN and her restoration by the RN Submarine Museum in Gosport, which preserved the vessel.

Launched in 1901, the boat was a rudimentary marriage of petrol engine, electric motor and storage battery which set the pattern for the development of the submarine.

After 12 years of service it was decommissioned, and sank while being towed to the scrapyard.

It was rediscovered almost 70 years later, raised and restored to go on permanent display.

Other pioneering projects on the IMechE heritage list include Trevithick's Penryn locomotive and the Bombe, an electromechanical decryption device created at the Bletchley Park code-cracking centre during World War 2 by Alan Turing.

The next Third Thursday Talk at the Museum sees author Simon Jones explore underground warfare during World War 1 (June 16).

The following month has Vice Admiral Sir Tim McClement talking of his time as First Lieutenant in HMS Conqueror, including the sinking of the Belgrano in 1982 (July 21)

www.submarine-museum.co.uk

Party in Portsmouth

PORTSMOUTH Historic Dockyard will be celebrating Armed Forces Day this month with a series of free events hosted by the National Museum of the Royal Navy, as well as the chance to see HMS Daring and HMS Gloucester.

On Saturday June 25 the Victory Arena will become a 1940s-style street party, and veterans will be on hand to relate their stories.

And on the Saturday and Sunday the two destroyers will be open to the public – operational commitments allowing.

Sunday June 26 also sees the

celebration of the centenary of the 'Dockyard Museum' in Portsmouth, the ancestor of today's museum, which was opened on June 28 1911 in the Great Ropehouse.

The museum was the brainchild of Secretary to the Admiral Superintendent of Portsmouth Royal Dockyard, Mr Pescott-Frost, who recognised the fact that HMS Dreadnought was ushering in a new era for the Navy and that relics of the age of sail needed to be preserved.

For details see www.historicdockyard.co.uk

BRNC boost for Dartmouth

THE HEAD of Dartmouth has praised the efforts of local charities as they collected a string of donations.

Britannia Royal Naval College's Cdre Simon Williams made the comments as more than £2,000 was passed to community groups including Dartmouth Sea Cadets.

He said: "Everyone connected to BRNC gains a lot from our strong connections with the local community and we are delighted to be able to help with regular donations from our fund-raising activities."

Officer cadets arranged pub quizzes, raffles and an arm wrestling contest to raise the money. A specific evening for the RNLI was organized by Vanguard Division and boosted their funds by £450.

Other beneficiaries included Dartmouth Caring, Rowcroft Hospice, Dartmouth's Guide Dogs for the Blind and the Cats Protection League.

The presentation was made in mid-April at the naval college.

Scots sailor in Gobi march

A SCOTS petty officer will walk shoulder to shoulder with football fans across one of the world's harshest environments for charity.

Glasgow Celtic fan PO Tony McCallum will trek 100 miles across the Gobi desert to raise money in memory of two Scottish greats.

PO McCallum is part of a group of 18 – six Celtic fans, six Rangers fans and six Motherwell fans – who will raise cash in honour of Jimmy Johnstone and Davie Cooper.

Former Celtic player Johnstone died of Motor Neurone Disease and Rangers star Cooper died of a brain haemorrhage in 1995.

The group, who are being followed by a BBC crew, will leave for the trek from the Hampden football stadium during Scotland's international match with the Czech Republic on September 2.

The proceeds from their journey will go to Motor Neurone Disease Scotland and the Davie Cooper Centre.

Tyne lands a Lord Mayor

THE FISHERY patrol vessel HMS Tyne took part in an unusual operation off the coast of Wales in aid of charity.

Swapping patrol duties for taxi work, the 80-metre River Class vessel delivered a Cardiff council worker to the island of Flat Holm, five miles into the Bristol Channel.

John Holloman decided to be 'shipwrecked' for four nights on the island to raise money for Latch Welsh Children's Cancer Charity, the Lord Mayor's chosen charity. For one night Cllr Keith Hyde even joined John on the island.

Lt Cdr Will Peters, commanding officer of HMS Tyne, said: "This was a splendid charity event which I hope will raise a lot of money and we were delighted to be asked to transport the council party out to the island."

Call to honour mariners

THE Shipwrecked Mariners' Society is asking members of the maritime and air/sea rescue community to nominate colleagues for acts of bravery.

Celebrity presenter and gardener Alan Titchmarsh is supporting the awards, which mark the 172nd anniversary of the society.

An aircrew from RNAS Culdrose won an award at last year's event for their rescue of four trawlermen off the Isles of Scilly on New Year's Eve.

For more information contact Chief Executive Malcolm Williams on 01243 789329 or general@shipwreckedmariners.org.uk

Talent atop Kilimanjaro

THE TALENT submariners who headed out to Tanzania to climb Kilimanjaro made it to the summit – but it was described as "an emotional experience."

CPO Darren Lunn said: "It should have taken five days, but we did it in four. We decided not to do the acclimatisation."

All four submariners – CPO Lunn, PO Paul 'Scrimmers' Scrimshaw, ET Adam 'Willie' Williams and ET Daniel 'Whisky' Walker – did make it to the peak, although one did suffer with a nasty bout of altitude sickness (possibly not surprising for a deep...).

He added: "The relief at reaching the summit was the highlight."

"It was amazing once we got off the plane in Tanzania. Just to see the mountain itself free-standing was so impressive."

"It exceeded all my expectations."

Darren concluded: "I'd recommend it to anyone. Just go for it."

The team have raised over £700 for the RNBT (Royal Naval Benevolent Trust), but if anyone



● Scaling the slopes of Kilimanjaro, CPO Darren Lunn, PO Paul 'Scrimmers' Scrimshaw, ET Adam 'Willie' Williams, and ET Daniel 'Whisky' Walker

else wants to pledge their support you can write to CPO Lunn on the boat at: HMS Talent, BFPO 401.

Last month the team also took to their boots to tackle the Keswick to Barrow walk, the

40-mile sponsored team walk (and from the records Darren finished 25th on the day).

And plans are in hand for another mountainous adventure to Mount Elbrus, Europe's highest mountain, in spring next year.



Carl sets a record

THIS year's London Marathon proved heavy going for Royal Marines Sgt Carl Creasey, but that didn't prevent him breaking a world record and raising more than £2,500 for the charity Seafarers UK.

Carl, carrying a 60lb pack over the 26.2-mile course, completed the marathon in the weight-carrying record time of 4h 50m 56s. "I've always taken part in running events, and have never been afraid of enduring challenges," said Carl. "But the London Marathon was by far my toughest challenge yet."

Director General of Seafarers, Commodore Barry Bryant, described Carl's feat as amazing. He was there to see it. "We couldn't be more pleased with this fantastic effort," he said.

Carl said he chose to support the charity as it is offering growing support to RN and RM personnel injured in Afghanistan and paid tribute to his family and friends – especially his mother – who led his fundraising as well as his trainer Ben Law who ran the route with him.

You can still support Carl's record breaking run by visiting www.justgiving.com/carl-creasey.

Medics help horses

SAILORS, soldiers and airmen mucked in to help out an animal sanctuary for former military horses.

More than 30 volunteers from the Defence School of Medical Technical Training spent a day at The Horses Trust sanctuary in Buckinghamshire.

They helped with maintenance tasks including painting fences, horse shelters and barns, and landscaping parts of the site.

Based at Keogh Barracks in Aldershot, the personnel are training to become medics in the armed forces.

Major Ashok Rao, Officer Commanding Phase 2 Training, said: "We have encouraged voluntary work among the trainees as there are several benefits to all parties concerned."

Fleet of foot

A TEAM of Fleet Air Arm runners put in a marathon effort for south west charities.

Five members of 702 Naval Air Squadron based at RNAS Yeovilton ran the Yeovil half marathon and raised £400 for St Margaret's Hospice.

Cdr Peter Hoare, commanding officer of 702 Squadron, said: "It's great that at the same time as supporting the new half marathon we can support St Margaret's Hospice with the important work they do."

702 Squadron is the training squadron for the Westland-manufactured Lynx helicopter.

Meanwhile, also in March, 771 Search and Rescue Naval Air Squadron took on the Bath Half Marathon for the RNLI and the Lizard Lifeboat appeal.

The squadron's commanding officer, Lt Cdr Chris Canning, said: "This is another example of a great fundraising idea."

National lap for troops

TROOPS recently returned from Afghanistan received a standing ovation from thousands of racegoers at the Grand National.

Thirty-eight serving personnel including sailors walked the home straight at Aintree as part of an initiative by the British Forces Foundation.

Aintree marketing manager Emma Owen said: "The appearance of Servicemen and women, newly returned from Afghanistan, raised huge cheers from our crowds on Grand National Day as we all showed our support."

Dorchester do

TICKETS are on sale for a black tie celebration of Britain's armed forces. The British Forces Foundation charity fundraiser will take place at The Dorchester in London on Tuesday, June 28.

Ticket prices and information are available by calling the BFF on 01672 564911 or emailing info@bff.org.uk.

Neptune Band wow the crowd

FASLANE base workers, service personnel and Helensburgh schoolchildren enjoyed a band performance at HM Naval Base Clyde's new mess.

More than £450 was raised during the evening concert by HMS Neptune Volunteer Band, which will be split between Parklands School near Faslane

RBL boost for Dunstaners

ST DUNSTAN's, the national charity that supports blind ex-Service people, has received a donation of £2.6 million from the Royal British Legion.

The donation, part of the RBL's commitment to the welfare of the Armed Forces family, will go towards running St Dunstan's high-dependency unit at its Llandudno Centre in North Wales.

Blue Hurworth

SAILORS from HMS Hurworth have taken part in a citywide cancer charity day.

The Portsmouth-based minehunter's crew coaxed personnel and staff at the naval base to dig deep for Blue Day on Friday May 6.

Fundraising was carried out to help the Tom Prince Cancer Trust – a charity devoted to raising money in memory of a Portsmouth fan who died on the eve of his 16th birthday.

and other charities.

Band Colour Sergeant Ann Miller said: "The evening was full of musical variation and featured performances by the big band, soloists, a Corps of Drums and a piper."

The event was held in March at the supermess, which was completed last year.

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Cougar tackle

AS TASK groups go, Cougar is not the easiest to keep a handle on.

For a start, ships and units join and leave the main group throughout the long-planned deployment, undertaking specific training tasks or visiting particular ports.

Cougar was designed to test the concept of the UK's new Response Force Task Group (RFTG), a multi-role force capable of tackling a wide range of tasks from humanitarian evacuations to amphibious landings.

Assault ship HMS Albion acts as flagship of the task group, and she sailed from the UK with frigate HMS Sutherland and landing ship RFA Cardigan Bay in April.

The second main element followed on, led by the Royal Navy's largest vessel, helicopter carrier HMS Ocean, completed by RFAs Wave Knight, Fort Rosalie and Mounts Bay – and their arrival in the task group more than doubled the number of aircraft available to Cdre John Kingwell, Commander UK Task Group.

Ahead of them was a complex



programme of national joint Service and multinational exercises, rendezvous and diplomatic visits.

Amongst the objectives of Cougar was the first firing of Hellfire missiles by Army Apache helicopters while operating from a Royal Navy warship.

That milestone, proving Apache's capability to strike from the sea using both 30mm cannon as well as radar-guided missiles, was passed in exercise areas off Gibraltar, when the aircraft launched from Ocean and blasted away at sea-borne targets.

More than 500 30mm rounds and nine Hellfire missiles were loosed off, with a 100 per cent strike rate.

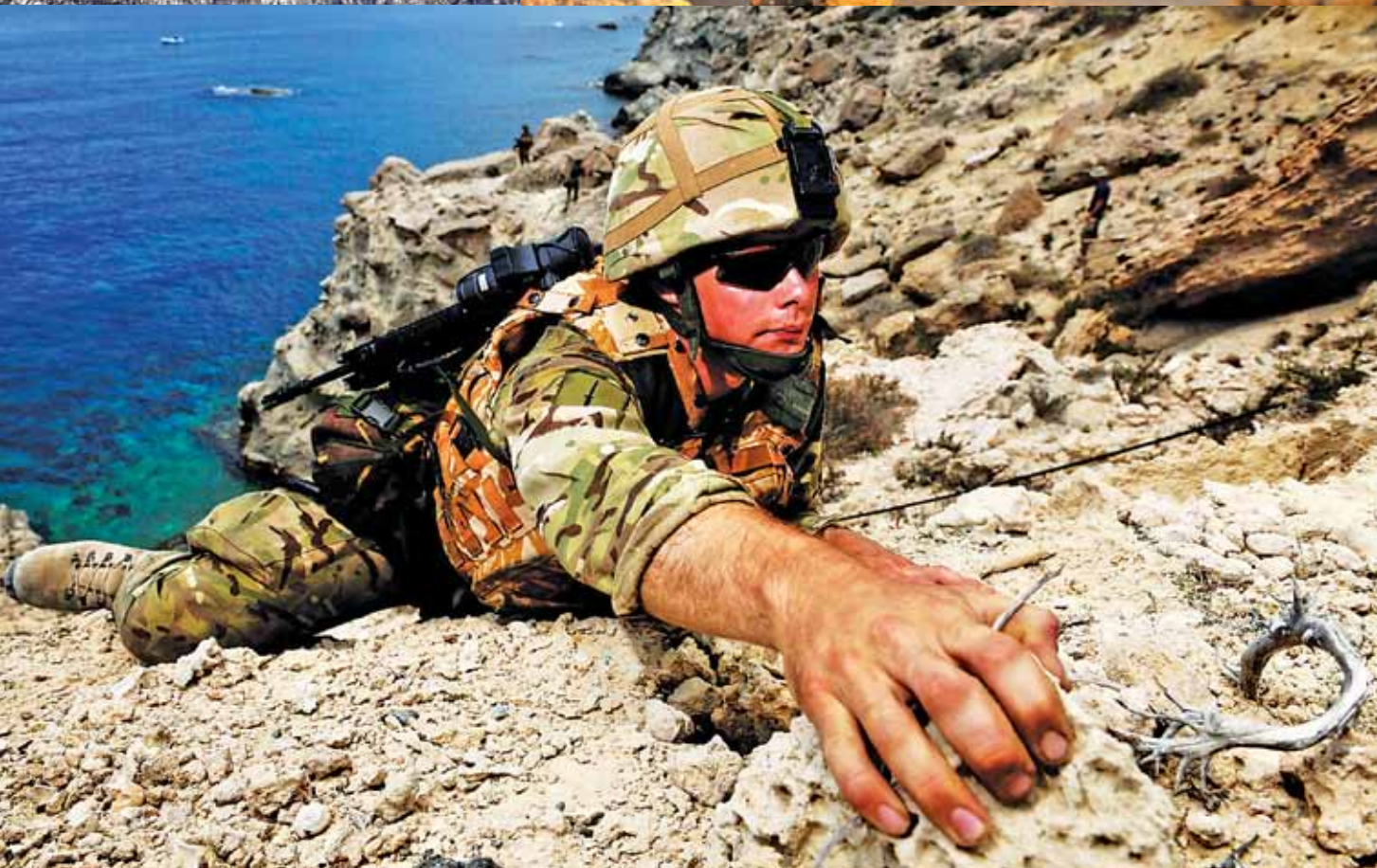
Maj Mike Neville, who commands 656 Sqn Army Air Corps, said: "Today we proved that Apache can operate effectively from a Royal Navy ship, transporting munitions from the ship's magazine, aircraft upload, launch, firing and then recovering to HMS Ocean."

"Once again 656 Squadron is at the leading edge of attack helicopter capability development. We are now well on the way to proving the maritime strike capability in highly-complex scenarios."

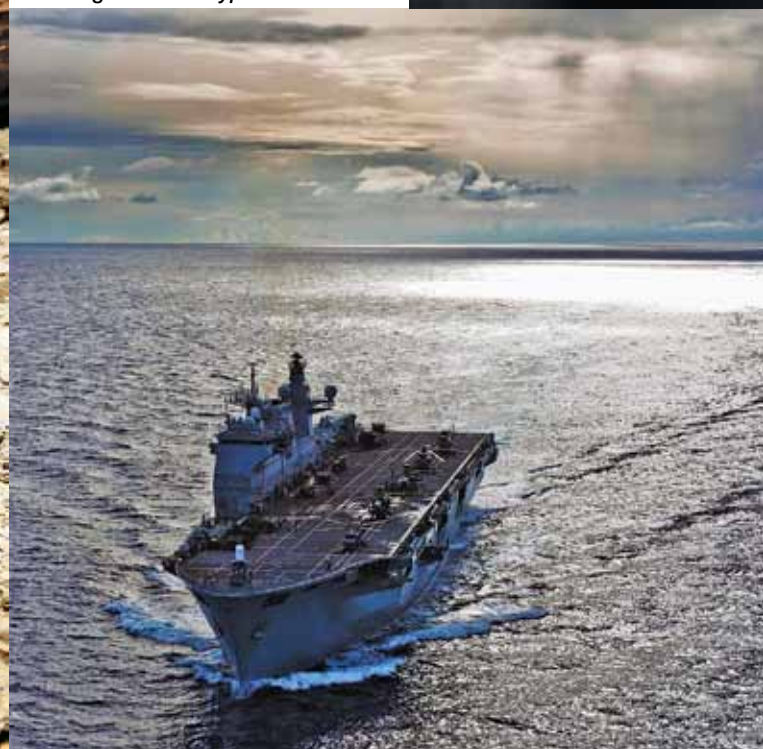
656 was not the only Army presence in the task group.

Personnel from 17 Port and Maritime Regt deployed in Albion, Cardigan Bay and Mounts Bay to support the amphibious exercises of 40 Commando RM by shifting men and machines between ships and shore using mexeflote rafts.

There is also a port detachment which can create and operate an 'austere' port from scratch.



● Clockwise from top left: A Sea King conducts a vertical replenishment between HMS Albion and RFA Fort Rosalie; Albion replenishes stores from Fort Rosalie; RFA Wave Knight pumps fuel to HMS Ocean (foreground) and Albion during Exercise Cypriot Lion; A Sea King operates from Albion; An Army Apache fires Hellfire missiles for the first time at sea in exercise areas off Gibraltar; HMS Sutherland leads RFA Cardigan Bay through the Mediterranean; Two Apaches in 'weapons safe' configuration on Ocean before launching for weapons firing off Gibraltar; Sailors and Royals play bucketball on Ocean's flight deck; Signals Troop 40 Cdo RM doing aerobics as part of their daily PT in Ocean; The CO of Ocean, Capt Andy Betton, takes part in training in Cyprus; Ocean en route to Cyprus; Delta Coy 40 Cdo RM conduct vertical assault training on Exercise Cypriot Lion; Sutherland in the Mediterranean; 9 Assault Squadron RM transport Charlie Coy 40 Cdo RM in landing craft during Cypriot Lion; A Royal Marine from 40 Cdo RM fast ropes from a Lynx to Ocean; The Armoured Support Group RM take their Vikings for a swim during Exercise Cyprus Wader





s Cypriot Lion

One of the first major exercises saw elements of the group converge off the UK's Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus for 'Wader' training.

Using Albion's eight landing craft as well as Sea Kings and Lynx of the Commando Helicopter Force, troops of 40 Commando Royal Marines and their vehicles went through drills from simple embarkation and disembarkation to full amphibious raids on the coast.

As well as adding to the task group's capabilities, Waders also keep Royals up to speed with one of their core functions – after a decade of operations in Afghanistan it ensures the men, particularly the youngsters, know what to expect in sustained day and night amphibious operations.

It has been just as educational for the men and women of Albion; while the assault ship has a twin-spot flight deck she has no hangar, and was not designed to operate with a 'tailored air group' or TAG.

But elements of 845 and 847 Naval Air Squadrons have called the ship home since leaving the UK.

Indeed, the flagship saw 180 deck landings during the first two weeks of Cougar, and Sutherland's Naval Lynx Mk 8 has also been operating from Albion as well during the Wader series off Cyprus.

The range of military hardware is greatly extended with the presence of Cardigan Bay, which not only supports two companies of Royal Marines, but also disgorges hovercraft, raiding craft, diving support boats from her capacious dock, and by using mexeflotes can send personnel carriers, Land Rovers, ambulances, support vehicles and trucks ashore to sustain the amphibious push.

Sutherland then detached from the main body of the task group to visit Patras in Greece.

The frigate's Commanding Officer, Cdr Roger Readwin, said: "The Hellenic Navy and the Royal Navy have a strong naval connection, which has been built up over many years.

"Whilst visiting the beautiful town of Patras provided an opportunity

for my ship's company to enjoy some relaxation, it also served to strengthen the relationship between our two navies further, through local engagement."

It also gave the ship a chance to prepare for the next set of exercises, for which it was back to Cyprus.

The task group, now pretty much full strength with the combination of Albion's and Ocean's formations, got stuck into Exercise Cypriot Lion, which involved more assaults on the shores of the British bases, with the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps adding an international perspective – though they and their British counterparts are long-standing comrades-in-arms.

Cypriot Lion also involved air defence exercises and live firings at sea.

On her way to Cyprus the task group flagship also paid respects to the fallen of an earlier generation.

She called in to Souda Bay to commemorate the victims of the Battle of Crete in May 1941, some 1,500 of who are buried in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery close to where Albion was berthed.





CLASSIC JACK

BY TUGS



● The P2000s exercising in the Solent just before Easter
Picture: LA(Phot) Arron Hoare, FRPU East

A refresher for you on small ships

I MUST say it gets a bit tedious having to correct *Navy News* every time there is mention of MTB102 as on page 3 of the May edition.

The picture you feature of the P2000 Fleet in formation has the caption *Eleven of the Navy's P2000s joined by MTB102 and two launches.*

This would be a bit difficult as at the time MTB102 was in her boatyard undergoing her annual slip and maintenance.

The 102 in your picture is HSL102, an RAF launch. It's a poor show when the Navy cannot tell the difference between one of its own and the opposition. I suggest you check out www.mtb102.com to refresh the Navy's memory of what her small ships did in days past.

MTB102 was in Holland in early May for the Dutch Liberation Day celebrations and is ready now for a trip from her home at Lowestoft to Ramsgate for the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships Commemorative Cruise over the bank holiday weekend.

As we will have a contingent of ratings from HMS Collingwood with us at Ramsgate we will do our best to make sure they can tell the difference.

MTB102 is grey and has two big torpedo tubes on the deck. What more do you need?

— Richard Basey Skipper MTB102,

Commodore Association of Dunkirk Little Ships

I WAS surprised to learn from the May edition that there are 14 ships in the University Royal Naval Units with 11 of them pictured together in the Solent.

Contrast this with another article in the same edition detailing the last voyage of another Type 22 frigate returning home to be decommissioned together with her three sisters and the Ark Royal.

It seems we can no longer afford to keep many of our front-line ships, but can afford to 'give influential youngsters a greater appreciation of what the Navy does.'

I'm sure this will be a great comfort to the many sailors currently facing redundancy.

— John Lee, Whitburn, Sunderland

It's good to keep company

ONCE out of uniform, one tries not to be too much of a SOF but it's not always easy.

Some standards and rituals are worth keeping and the proper use of our nautical language is, for me, important.

It's irritating enough hearing civilian friends, and broadcast media, refer to a ship as a boat, even when that boat is HMS Albion or RMS Queen Mary 2.

However, I notice an increasing tendency to call a ship's company 'a crew.'

I was taught that boats and aircraft have crews and ships have companies – and ships *carry* boats and aircraft, of course. But, for every rule there's an exception too.

In the media and in MOD press releases and elsewhere, captains of HM Ships (and Boats) often seem now to refer to their 'crew' and less frequently to their 'ship's company.'

I know we have a smaller Royal Navy but the ships are not all boats, and surely we don't have to have a smaller lexicon of nautical language to match the smaller fleet?

I accept that most civilians are sea-blind, but we should take care not to civilianise our nautical language unnecessarily, for language is a living thing and thrives on usage, conversely, words (and language) soon die out if not in common usage.

It would be interesting to know how the Royal Navy dealt with nautical language and naval terms given the huge intake of civilians as RNVR officers and Hostilities Only ratings in World War 2.

— Lester May, Camden Town, London

Generally speaking we refer to a 'ship's company' in these pages, but I hope readers will forgive references to 'crew' to prevent too much repetition — Ed

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

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Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



opinion

WHEN HMS Liverpool returned fire on a rocket battery in Libya, it was the first time a Royal Navy ship had fired her 4.5 medium range gun in anger since Iraq in 2003.

The fact that Liverpool and her ship's company were ready and equipped to respond proves the value of continuous training and of the great insurance policy which the Armed Forces represent.

The safety, free flow of trade and creation of prosperity on which we all depend don't exist because of luck, or because the world is an inherently safe and well-ordered place.

They exist because our Armed Forces stand equipped, trained and ready to step in when they come under threat.

The fact that few shots have been fired in anger for eight years does not indicate that we no longer need our Armed Forces at a high level of readiness and capability – it proves rather that deterrence works.

Deterrence is not only vested in the nuclear last resort, important though that is, and welcome the confirmation that the Vanguard replacement class is on its way.

It also relies on the presence of Royal Navy ships at sea working hard on the nation's behalf to deter threats before they reach the 4.5 gun response.

Most of this work is silent and unseen, and it doesn't come cheap, but its importance in maintaining global stability cannot be overstated.

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Tor of duty



POSING in front of Berlin's most famous landmark, reservists from HMS Calliope take in the sights of the German capital with an unusual 'guide book', a copy of *Navy News*...

...which oddly features no information whatsoever about the Brandenburg Gate. Or the Reichstag. Or Unter den Linden. Still, it's a good read...

A team from the Gateshead unit left the Tyne for a few days in the German capital on 'Exercise Berlin Shoot' to earn one of the country's highest awards for marksmanship.

The part-time matelots were determined to return to the North-East with the *Schützenschmur* – the weapons proficiency badge – after a day's practice getting used to unfamiliar weapons, followed by a day's full-on shooting.

The reservists rocked up in Berlin expecting spartan Army barracks... but instead found they were billeted in a mock French château, built post-war when French forces occupied part of the then-divided city.

Being good matelots, the reservists quickly decamped to the bar to sample Berlin hospitality.

There were, said PO Jim Hudson, "the finest German ales inside, with a tank and jet fighter in the car park. Only in Berlin..."

To the real reason for the visit now and that badge. The sailors were given a P8 pistol, G36 rifle and MG3 machine-gun to strip, rebuild, load and, most importantly, operate safely.

"No easy task when the manual was in a foreign language," said Jim. "Some of us had never fired a rifle before while others knew no more German than *Vorsprung durch Technik*..."

Thankfully, the guns proved to be relatively intuitive, so by the afternoon of the practice day, the reservists were using them on the weapons simulator – a computerised range.

After ten hours' training it was off to the pub (again) ahead of badge day.

Said Jim: "The challenges were a variety of tests: shooting from standing, kneeling and prone positions. We were tested on all the weapons that we had drilled

with the day before and the team acquitted themselves admirably. We came home with a host of awards – and a lot of smiling faces. National pride intact!"

The final full day in Berlin was a rig run, beginning with a tribute to Britain's war dead at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery where the sailors laid a wreath as did their hosts from the Bundeswehr and the Royal British Legion's Berlin branch.

That was followed by a near-identical ceremony at the nearby *Bundeswehr* cemetery with two minutes' silence announced by the bosun's call from AB Ed Warrington.

A rather less solemn afternoon followed for the sailors, still in No.1s, as their German hosts guided them through the sights of the city, from a visit to the Chancellery building and nearby Reichstag, to a look at the Brandenburg Gate and a cruise along the River Spree.

"As we were in No.1s we drew a lot of admiring glances from the public," said Jim. "There was also a slightly irate Italian woman who wanted us to fix her Walkman as she assumed we were part of the crew."

The trip ended with the reservists attending a reception aimed at raising awareness of post-traumatic stress suffered by German troops. As well as the Calliope men and women, the event was attended by German MPs, military leaders "and probably the only German-speaking American country and western band in the world".

AB Warrington added: "Berlin's a beautiful city – full of magnificent architecture, a wealth of history and an upbeat metropolitan vibe. Our hosts made sure that we were able to enjoy the modern Berlin, but also reflect the gravity of the past surrounding us."

As for the shooting, the AB returned from Germany with a silver-rated *Schützenschmur* which "holds pride of place on my wall".

"The G36 assault rifle and P8 pistol were particularly impressive – their accuracy and ease of use were astounding."

Blimey, we managed to get to the end of a story about Geordies in Germany without any gratuitous references to *Auf Wiedersehen, Pet*...

Reburied with honour

TWO hundred years ago they were probably buried with the simplest of ceremonies, but last month all the dead who lie in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Haslar were honoured with a formal service of remembrance.

The burial grounds at Haslar are thought to be the last resting place of up to 16,000 sailors, soldiers and hospital staff who died between 1753 and 1859, when a new cemetery was opened at Clayhall.

Nobody knows for sure how many bodies lie in the Paddock, but forensic examination of some of the skeletons has revealed many fascinating insights into their lives and deaths.

The remains of 47 bodies exhumed from the burial grounds for research at Cranfield University were returned to their graves, wrapped in simple linen shrouds.

That was followed by a formal service of remembrance held in the hospital's chapel, St Luke's, led by the Rev Canon Ted Goodyer, Rector of St Mary's in Alverstoke.

The service included the naval hymn, *Eternal Father Strong to Save*, and the *Last Post* and *Reveille* played by Royal Marine buglers.

It was attended by staff past and present from the hospital, including the Medical Director General (Naval) Surgeon Rear Admiral Lionel Jarvis, and Mrs Sylvia Bell, now in her 90s,

who served as a member of the Voluntary Aid Detachment (Navy) at Haslar during the Second World War.

Also present was the Russian Assistant Naval Attaché, Cdr Dmitry Bognachev, who was invited because the burial grounds contain hundreds of his fellow Russians.

Many of them died after 80 members of the Russian Fleet were landed at Haslar suffering from typhus in 1770, and some 35 years later, 126 Russian sailors and cavalymen were interred there after being admitted to Haslar from Russian ships impounded in Portsmouth Harbour.

Cdr Bognachev, a keen historian, laid a laurel wreath in the grounds. He said: "I never knew that so many of my countrymen lie in one place in the UK. It was an honour to pay tribute to them, and to all the people who died in the service of their country."

The Rev Goodyer blessed a cross which was presented by the Haslar Heritage Group in memory of all who served at the hospital over its 250-years' life-span.

The cross rests on a plinth of wood taken from an 18th-Century beam in the hospital and was crafted by Ken Enticknap, Falklands veteran and former Executive Officer of HMS Nelson in Portsmouth.

Picture: Richard McMinn, National Coastwatch Institution



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Tony is pride of London

A MEMBER of HMS President has been named Greater London Reservist of the Year – the first time a sailor has won the accolade.

Lt Tony Scott RNR (above) won the Cobra Trophy at the Greater London Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA) awards evening.

In civilian life, Lt Scott works for EMC Consulting, and his American boss, Dave Cox (Vice President Global Service Lines and before that a US Navy submariner) flew in from Boston to attend the evening – during which he received a SaBRE Certificate of Support from the Lord Lieutenant of Greater London, Sir David Brewer.

A mine warfare specialist, Lt Scott was mobilised from January 2009 to April 2010 to the Arabian Gulf, and his contribution was such that his mobilisation period was extended twice.

On returning to President he was appointed Unit Public Relations Officer (PRO), and quickly harnessed the power of Facebook and Twitter in the unit's recruitment drive, putting President at the forefront of the RNR in terms of new media.

Among Lt Scott's other responsibilities are organising film nights and an annual battlefield tour.

At the same ceremony, President's LS Chris Adams was awarded the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate of Meritorious Service.

LS Adams joined the RNR in 1985 as a Junior Rate within the Seaman specialisation, taking an active role in minesweepers during training weekends and exercises.

After the dedicated ships of the 10th MCM Squadron were withdrawn in the 1990s, LS Adams remained active in seagoing roles until transferring to HMS President's New Entry organisation in 2010.

He is now involved in the training and development of tomorrow's RNR, an appropriate role as he nears the end of his career.

A regular competitor in the Royal Navy Ski Championships, LS Adams also plays a major part in the unit's ceremonial and social functions, and is currently the Junior Rates' Mess President.

Legal team pay a visit

THE Maritime Warfare School Phoenix Training Group welcomed the Judge Advocate General and six Judge Advocates for a visit arranged to allow the group to familiarise themselves with the Naval Service and its current roles.

While at HMS Collingwood, the judges saw a ship's team from HMS Daring undergoing damage control continuation training in the DRIU – the Damage Repair Instructional Unit, which simulates flooding damage to a ship.

The legal team said they were amazed by the sense of realism created by the DRIU, and that they were impressed by the facilities provided by the MWS Phoenix Training Group.



Divers host civic sightseers

A GROUP of local authority dignitaries from across Hampshire has been given an insight into the world of Royal Navy divers.

The 15 mayors and chairmen were taking part in a Civic Day, organised by the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth Cllr Paula Riches, which aims to show the mayors sights normally hidden from public view.

For this stage of the day (*see left*) members of the Fleet Diving Squadron demonstrated their equipment and explained their roles.

The Lord Mayor and her guests were briefed on the huge breadth of tasks performed by the squadron, which includes underwater engineering, clearing assault beaches of sea mines, improvised explosive device (IED) disposal and search and rescue missions, and saw practical demonstrations.

Cllr Riches said: "Portsmouth enjoys a tremendous bond with the Royal Navy and it was fantastic to share this experience with all the Hampshire Mayors and Chairmen."



Mersey chef wins top title

A NAVY chef who puts his heart and soul into a range of other tasks on board his fishery protection patrol ship has won a major award.

LCH Richard Tame has been crowned Armed Services Caterer of the Year, sponsored by Purple Foodservice Solutions, at the Cost Sector Catering awards.

LCH Tame was chosen because, according to his citation, he had "excelled during his time onboard HMS Mersey and is a true ambassador for all chefs serving in minor war vessels."

Noting that he had spent a minimum of nine months at sea during the course of a year, the citation continued: "LCH Tame has consistently demonstrated his high-calibre catering abilities and culinary skill working from a very small galley and in all weathers."

But his qualities extend beyond the bijou galley on board the lean-manned River-class vessel, where he also leads, coaches and mentors a young team of chefs.

He is an assistant fisheries protection boarding officer, having been involved in more than 100 boardings, often in rough weather and high seas – "a task at which he has truly excelled," according to the citation.

LCH Tame also has a role in the seamanship part of the vessel, assisting with berthing in harbour, launching the sea boat and the recovery of a man overboard.

And as the ship has no medical staff on board, he "hugely impressed... with his drive, determination and diligence in pursuing one of his core secondary duties of managing, training and acting as the I/C of the ship's first aid party consisting of six people."

Summing up LCH Tame's contribution, the citation concludes: "He stands out from the crowd and is a model for the modern Naval caterer."

Final duty for admiral

REAR Admiral Chris Snow marked his final visit to the Maritime Warfare School as Flag Officer Sea Training by accepting an invitation to be Guest of Honour at the establishment's Friday divisions.

Following Rear Admiral Snow's inspection of the Guard of Honour he left the parade ground with the sound of three cheers ringing in his ears as parade personnel wished him well for the future.

The Admiral followed that up by formally endorsing the newly-branded Victory Squadron, formerly the Phase 2 Training Group.

In a ceremony witnessed by Phase 2 trainees, graduating trainees, their families and special guests – five representatives of Pembroke House – the Admiral unveiled the Victory Squadron plaque.

Rear Admiral Snow also presented AB(CIS) Bremer with the Victory Squadron Spring Term award for RN Ethos.

Cdre Tim Lowe, CO of the Maritime Warfare School, said: "I would like to give special thanks to those attending from Pembroke House – your service, commitment and dedication encapsulates all that Victory Squadron stands for today."

President maintains hot cross bun ritual



● AB2 Sara Marr-Phillips is hoisted towards the ceiling of the Widow's Son pub in Bow to place this year's hot cross bun in the net with its predecessors
Picture: Lt Tony Scott RNR

A TRADITION borne of the enduring love of a mother for her lost son, and supported by the Royal Navy for decades, has been re-enacted once again this spring.

And a young rating from the Royal Naval Reserve at HMS President in London, took centre stage at the event in the Widow's Son pub in Bow.

AB2 Sara Marr-Phillips was hoisted aloft to place a hot cross bun into a net suspended from the ceiling of the pub – echoing the actions of the widow.

The story states that a sailor in Napoleonic times (or possibly the mid-Victorian period – take your choice...) bid his mother farewell and promised to return home by Easter, a promise he was unable to fulfil when he was lost at sea.

The widow had baked a hot cross bun for his return, and when Easter came and went she kept the bun for him.

She did the same the following year, and the year after, keeping each bun and eventually hanging them from a beam in the roof of her cottage, which according to some versions of the tale became known as the Bun House.

By the middle of the 19th century the widow had died and a public house was built on the site of her home, taking the name the Widow's Son in honour of her steadfastness.

The custom of adding a further bun continued for a period, then apparently died out until it was revived and enthusiastically supported by the Royal Navy, who provided a Hoisting party, a

Bun Hoister and even, according to some versions of bun-hoisting protocol, a Bunno to organise the event.

So it was that a party of 20 or so officers and ratings from HMS President presented themselves at the Widow's Son in good time on Good Friday.

The pub features a number of Naval embellishments, including numerous ratings' caps, and from the ceiling hangs a net containing

numerous hot cross buns dating back decades (the more mature ones looking less than appetising these days).

At around 3pm the simple ceremony itself took place, with this year's Bun Hoister being AB2 Marr-Phillips, who placed the specially-baked bun into the net with its predecessors as a large crowd cheered her on.

Also watching this year was Alan Beckett, whose brother Frederick

was Bun Hoister in 1958, and who has become something of a regular over the intervening decades.

Then it was on with the party as the ceremony has become the starting point for wider celebrations – and a further valuable opportunity for the members of HMS President to put the Royal Navy in the public eye and explain their role beyond the perpetuation of a quirky historical tradition.

Families enjoy a day of fun

ALMOST 1,000 families, friends and serving members of 40 Commando Royal Marines enjoyed a fun day in the sunshine at Norton Manor Camp.

Under the sponsorship of charity Go Commando, the Spring Family Fun Day offered a bewildering array of entertainments, from dogdags to inter-company competitions.

Local businesses provided entertainment and refreshments, including a hog roast, barbecue and plenty of ice cream, and there were displays of RM skills and expertise, including static displays of weapons.

With more than 400 of the marines of 40 Cdo, including new Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Matt Jackson, already deployed on Cougar 11, second-in-command Maj Aldiey Alderson addressed the families, thanking them for supporting the event, adding: "We are delighted that today is sponsored by Go Commando, giving so many different activities for all to get involved with and enjoy."

The charity was founded by Sean O'Brian during the Commando's most recent deployment to Afghanistan, harnessing community support for the Royals in Taunton.



● An alternative Royal Marines assault course at the Spring Family Fun Day at Norton Manor Camp



● Action from the tug of war competition

Pictures: LA(Phot) Si Ethell



● **Darren Clark**

Picture: Paul Bruno – using the Nikon camera Darren helped return to him

Camera returned to owner

THE Fleet Air Arm Museum has played its part in reuniting a fan of the museum with his missing camera.

Paul Bruno stepped out of a London taxi cab following a visit to the Yeovilton attraction – but left his £450 Nikon camera and zoom lens in the cab.

The police and London Taxi Drivers Association were contacted but, fearing that a member of the public would have found it and considered it “their lucky day”, there was little confidence that the camera would be handed in.

Mr Bruno had visited the Somerset museum using a Gift Aid entry receipt, which entitled him to enter free of charge having previously visited the Museum in May last year.

The Gift Aid receipt listed the contact details of the museum, together with the date of purchase and Mr Bruno’s signature – and Mr Bruno had placed the receipt in his camera case for safekeeping.

All would have been lost had it not been for the honesty and tenacity of taxi driver Darren Clark, who found the receipt.

He contacted the Fleet Air Arm Museum and asked if their records could identify the address of the person named on the receipt.

They could, and the equipment was returned to Mr Bruno.

“Some say we live in a ‘finders keepers’ society but events like this restore your faith in humanity,” said Mr Bruno.

“I am so very grateful to Darren Clarke and the Fleet Air Arm Museum for reuniting me with my much-treasured camera.”

Sowing and cleaning

FLEDGLING sailors from HMS Raleigh’s Corporate Squadron joined forces with volunteers from Torpoint to plant saplings and clean up their corner of Cornwall.

The party of 11 sailors undergoing specialist training abandoned their studies for an afternoon to spend some time at Thanckes Park.

There they worked alongside the Friends of Thanckes Park planting more than 100 trees supplied free of charge by the Woodland Trust as part of its ‘More Trees, More Good’ campaign – and these were amongst the first in the country to be planted under the initiative.

A litter pick was also carried out as the sailors’ contribution to the first Clean Cornwall Week of 2011.

But that was still not enough – they also helped out at the Tamara Daycare Centre by preparing the outside decking area ready for the residents to use in the summer.

WO Garry Drew, Corporate Squadron Warrant Officer, said: “All the trainees had a wonderful afternoon and enjoyed making a contribution to the local community.

“With a busy training programme, their spare time is very limited so to be able to help out in this way and use their team-working skills was very rewarding.”

Raleigh trainees help banish winter blues



TRAINEE sailors from HMS Raleigh have once more helped banish winter in Cornwall.

The group took part in the annual Black Prince Flower Boat celebrations, heading an eclectic parade of dancers, musicians, children, and town criers through the villages of Millbrook, Kingsand and Cawsand, on the Rame Peninsula in south-east Cornwall.

Led by Lt Mickey Flitcroft, the sailors carried on their shoulders a model sailing ship, the Black Prince, which is decorated with flowers.

The eight trainees were Kieran Hammond, Michael Abbott, James Brady, James Taylor, James Low, Lewis Steele, Rob Latham and Jack Bradburn.

The ceremony dates back to the 19th century, and although it died out around 50 years ago it was revived in 1986.

Once the ship has been carried through the streets it is taken down onto the beach at Cawsand and launched into the sea, supposedly taking the last of the ravages of winter with it.

The model itself is housed throughout the rest of the year at Raleigh.

Chef Michael Abbott said: “I really felt proud to be taking part and to be representing the Royal Navy.

“The celebrations seemed to me to be a nice thing to do with everyone out having fun.

“There were some very interesting characters in fancy dress and the dancing was good.

“It was nice to be part of a longstanding local tradition.”

The Black Prince Flower Boat procession is jointly organised by the RNLI, with proceeds from the event, which include street collections, helping to fund the organisation’s work.

● **Trainees from HMS Raleigh join the May Day celebrations in Cornwall**



● **One of the Mayfield School pupils emerges from a hatch on board HMS Torbay**

Picture: LA(Phot) Martin Carney

Torbay hosts pupils

WEST Country submariners hosted children from a Torbay school for a visit to a nuclear submarine.

The youngsters of Mayfield School were taken round HMS Torbay by the submariners, and met the commanding officer.

On leaving the submarine they had lunch in the officers’ mess in Devonport Naval Base.

Mayfield School, which caters for youngsters with severe and profound learning difficulties, already had a thriving relationship with Torbay and her crew, which was further strengthened by the visit.

Cdr Nick Wheeler, the boat’s Commanding Officer, said: “All the sailors in HMS Torbay were pleased to have our special guests from Mayfield School on board.

“It gives us another perspective on what we do, and reminds us why we do the job, because of the often unexpected questions they ask.

“It is a very rewarding ongoing relationship we have with the school.

“After a previous visit they produced a picture which we have in pride of place on the wall in the wardroom on board.

“They take back ideas for further study in the classroom and never forget their visit.

“We did our best to make it a trip to remember – the school is a special charity for us; we raise money for them and also visit their classrooms and help them out.”

Mayfield School teacher Hayley McCaffrey said: “The children are all excited about the sea and coming to a submarine was a dream come true for one lad after he saw a photograph of one.

“It is lovely to take them out of the classroom and support our work topic about the coastline.

“The best way to learn about anything is to have a hands-on experience, and that is what we have here.

“We are really lucky to have this rare chance to come on board a real-life submarine, experiencing it and seeing where the sailors live and work and hearing from them first-hand about their work.

“Talking to the sailors also improves their interpersonal skills.”

Turf times for 702’s air engineers



ROYAL Navy air engineers at Yeovilton have helped a local school prepare new planting areas and grounds.

The WAFUs of 702 Naval Air Squadron undertook landscaping and painting duties at Milford Infant School to allow children to plant as part of a practical lesson.

The engineers (pictured left) built two raised beds, painted a new wooden storage shed and laid turf on the surrounding areas, leaving the patch ready for the children to move onto.

The leader of the group, LAET Jason Butler, said: “My team and I really enjoyed the experience.

“It was great to be involved with a project that will help the little ones learn new skills.”

702 Naval Air Squadron is the training squadron for the Lynx helicopter.

Members of the squadron are continuously involved in projects in the local community to help out where they can, reinforcing the strong relationships between the air station and surrounding towns and villages.

Vegetable patch transformed

TRAINEE submariners from HMS Raleigh have been helping a local school transform an old vegetable patch.

The team of three, under training at the Royal Navy Submarine School, spent the day at Fourlanesend Community Primary School near Cawsand, where they cleared overgrown plants and re-laid the vegetable patch into three raised and one level bed.

Head Teacher Rebecca Harris said: “We are very grateful to the team from HMS Raleigh for their hard work which accelerated the preparation of our allotment/vegetable patch.

“The partnership with Raleigh is much appreciated by the school as a valuable community enterprise.

“Pupils are looking forward to planting their favourite vegetables and hope to invite the submariners back to taste the produce.”

During the day the trainees also helped out by

moving a number of large items and play equipment.

Training Officer Lt Mickey Flitcroft said: “Working at the school allowed the trainees to use their team-working skills outside of their normal environment.

“They set their own objectives for completing the task using the limited resources available to them.

“This is the sort of thing they could find themselves doing on a much larger scale as their careers progress during a disaster relief operation abroad or aid to the population during a civil emergency in the UK.

“The guys worked very hard all day and enjoyed mixing with the pupils.

“The team also enjoyed their school dinner – the first they had had for a couple of years.”

● **From left: submariners Damien Moss, Colin Patrick and Ben Marsh, with pupils Jude Floyd and Jorja Flitcroft**

Picture: Dave Sheffield





'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'



● Claude Choules, in 2009 at the age of 108, reflects on a Naval career which spanned the globe and two World Wars

Picture: RAN Imagery Unit West

Last of the Last has died

THE last known surviving combat veteran from World War 1, Claude Choules, has died in Perth, Australia, aged 110.

Claude was born in Worcestershire in 1901 – two days after the Royal Australian Navy, which he later joined, came into existence – and joined the Royal Navy in 1915 as a boy seaman.

After training in the training ship Impregnable, in Plymouth, he joined HMS Revenge in the autumn of 1917, later witnessing the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet off the Firth of Forth ('Der Tag') in late 1918.

Trained as a torpedoman, Claude went on to serve in HMS Eagle, the RN's first purpose-built aircraft carrier.

Claude also served in World War 2, though half a world away from his roots.

He emigrated to join the Royal Australian Navy in 1925, meeting his future wife Ethel, though the first thing he did was return to the UK to further train at HMS Vernon in Portsmouth.

During the war Claude became chief demolition officer for western Australia, preparing explosive charges to destroy harbour facilities and oil tanks in the event of a Japanese invasion.

He also disposed of the first German mine washed up on Australian shores during the war.

His last duties in uniform were as a dockyard policeman. Upon retiring in 1956, he spent a decade as a fisherman.

In his 80s he recorded his memories, published in 2009 under the title *The Last of the Last*.

"Dad was always proud of his Navy service and considered it his other family," said Mr Choules' daughter Anne. "We are grateful for the Navy's continued association with the family and their recognition of our father's life."



● Claude at HMAS Cerberus in 1936



90th birthday celebrated

FORMER Navy Secretary Sir Patrick Duffy celebrated his 90th birthday at a gathering in the Naval Club, London.

Sir Patrick, (pictured left, standing), was Navy Minister from 1976-79, and one of the principal guests was Admiral Sir Raymond Lygo, Vice Chief of the Naval Staff during the late 1990s (pictured seated with his wife).

Also present were three of the four Private Secretaries of the time (one in a three star post), Sir Patrick's Assistant Private Secretary, Geoff Howland – who organised the event – two of

his three WRNS 2/O Personal Assistants and his RM Colour Sergeant driver, as well as Bishop Walmsley, sometime RN Principal RC Chaplain.

Sir Patrick was presented with a picture by his personal secretaries and assistant personal secretary, featuring two Swordfish flying from the World War 2 carrier HMS Ark Royal.

Sir Patrick was a FAA pilot, flying Swordfish of 811 NAS from HMS Biter; he went on to fly Albacores, Barracudas and Fireflies.

Admiral Lygo was also a Fleet Air Arm pilot, and later commanded HMS Ark Royal.



Generator is up for grabs

A WORKING generator from an old minesweeper is in need of a new home or else it will be scrapped.

The machine (detail above) was used on the locks at Chatham, but has now been replaced by new kit.

All asbestos has been removed, and it now just needs somebody to come along and take it away (though at over 6ft high and at least three times as long it will not fit in the boot of a car.)

If any shipmates know of an enthusiast or group who could use the huge machine, which is not needed by the Historic Dockyard, they should contact Martin Hughes on email at martin.hughes@medwayports.com

ANNUAL Conference in Plymouth this month will signal the start of an integrated marketing and membership campaign which could transform the outlook of the Association.

For months General Secretary S/M Paul Quinn has been working with members of the National Council and outside agencies to create and fine-tune a range of initiatives as well as a streamlined new look incorporating logos, typography, wording and colours.

The scheme has been tested at each stage with feedback from 4, 8 and 10 Area meetings, influencing the creation of posters, leaflets, stationery, membership cards, car stickers and a new website, which complements the visual identity of the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity – one of the many naval organisations the RNA supports.

The new branding also ties in with the official colours and fonts of the Royal Navy to highlight the fact that the RNA belonging to the same Naval family.

Shipmates will be asked to take part in a 'member get member' scheme, putting up posters (legally!) in key locations which will have space at the bottom for details of the local branch.

Packs will be issued to branches at Conference and sent to non-attending branches by post.

The packs for smaller branches (fewer than 15 members) will contain 100 leaflets, 100 referral cards, 20 car stickers, 20 A4-sized posters and one A1-sized poster; medium branches (15-30 members) will get packs containing twice the quantity, and larger branches will get three times the quantity.

Other initiatives will be announced at Conference as final details were being worked on in the weeks before Conference, which is being staged at the Guildhall in Plymouth on Saturday June 11.

The new look and the 'member-get-member' and Shipmates campaigns will be launched by Naval Secretary Admiral David Steel, who is the Guest of Honour at the Conference.

As well as changes to the Association's public face, there will be the usual round of awards, elections and branch motions.

This year sees seven such branch motions.

The first three, one from York and two from Chatham, seek to

amend terms of office, but with opposite effects.

York wants to see the Chairman appointed for two-year periods, with the Vice Chairman appointed in the alternate years for a similar period.

This, according to York branch, will provide vital continuity and will avoid the possibility to two key officers being voted out at the same time leaving two new incumbents to pick up the traces.

Chatham wants to see a number of officers appointed by the National Council for two-year periods, including the Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Legal Advisor, the Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee and National Officers for specific subjects such as Welfare, Communications and PR and the National Ceremonial Officer.

Chatham believes this will allow the National Council to be periodically regenerated by the infusion of new blood, providing fresh thinking on the way ahead.

Motion No 3 takes the idea one step further by suggesting branches be given the power to nominate candidates for the offices covered in Motion No 2, with such nominations being accompanied by a statement of the candidate's experience.

Motion No 4, proposed by Leyland, requests that the RNA "withdraw from membership of the International Maritime Confederation".

In Leyland's view cost of membership outweighs the benefit accrued by the Association, there is no knowledge of the IMC's workings, and "in No 10 Area certainly, no branches have had any connection with the IMC."

Motion five, from Llandudno, addresses the Memorandum of Understanding with the RN and exhorts the National Council to review and renegotiate it to add "greater value to the activities and interests of the RNA."

The branch believes that while the MOU is in principle a good idea, it "has failed because it has been poorly implemented" and "has not and will not bring us the numbers of full paid-up members we require."

The sixth motion, from East Antrim, urges the National Council to identify and obtain suitable HQ premises in an easily-accessible location, and to regularly report on progress and make a full report to the 2012 Conference.

The motion was prompted by the belief that the national Council has not fulfilled its promise, when it moved out of London, to relocate to a place which can be easily accessed by serving and ex-serving members of the Naval Service – the current HQ is at Semaphore Tower, within the secure area of Portsmouth Naval Base.

The final branch motion, put forward by Crosby, proposes that

"Crosby branch host the 2013 Annual Conference", which would be organised in conjunction with No 10 Area and staged at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool.

There is also one National Council motion, which paves the way for the enactment of a resolution from last year's Conference, allowing RN ships and establishments' RNA Liaison Officers to attend and vote in National Conferences.



● Anchors Aweigh for Padre Harry Crawford of HMCS Athabaskan at the Area 10 reunion

Area 10 meets up

ALMOST 200 members gathered at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool for the Area 10 Spring Conference and Annual Reunion.

The event started on the Friday afternoon when shipmates booked in for what would turn out to be one of the best reunions to date.

Diets quickly went out of the window as guests were greeted by a smiling waitress bearing quantities of cream-filled scones and strawberry tarts, which were enjoyed with tea and coffee in the Grand Lounge.

A full evening of entertainment,

into the small hours, concluded the first day.

The conference itself began at midday on the Saturday, formally opened by Dame Lorna Muirhead, the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside.

After business was wrapped up for the day the shipmates headed for the Banqueting Suite and a gala dinner.

The suite was decorated with red, white and blue serviettes, and the table plan – devised by Area Chairman S/M Dave Tollerton – was easily navigated by shipmates as each table had a large balloon bearing a ship's name appropriate to the relevant branches.

During the evening S/M Charles Hutton was presented with an engraved pewter tankard by Cdr Harry Harley, the Area President, to mark 21 years as Area Secretary.

As he was making his way back to his seat he was asked to return to the stage, along with S/M Eric Poole.

Charlie and Eric were founder members of the Trafford branch, which celebrated its Silver Anniversary on St George's Day, and each man received a plaque in recognition of their services to the branch.

S/M Diana Hutton was given a timepiece and a bouquet.

Following dinner, Jill Fielding

and her band entertained shipmates, with a comedian also taking to the stage.

Sunday's main activity was a service by the Mersey.

A coach took most shipmates and their partners to St Nicholas Church close to the Pier Head, where the Rector of Liverpool, Rev Steven Brookes, conducted the service, assisted by padre Harry Crawford of the Canadian Navy.

Following the service many members walked the few yards to the newly-dedicated avenue of maple trees which commemorates the assistance of the Canadian people during the pivotal Battle of the Atlantic of World War 2.

Canadian Iroquois-class destroyer HMCS Athabaskan was in Liverpool, and a number of shipmates visited her.

And the Area had a chance to repay that hospitality when a number of the destroyer's ship's company joined them for another evening of entertainment – which included a rum tub and the odd tot.

As the evening drew to a close S/M Tollerton presented the ship's padre with two 4ft 6in anchors made from balloons – leaving shipmates wondering how he would explain his 'excess luggage' to the Officer of the Day back on the ship...

Naval Quirks



Closure
of Harrier
recalled

HOW many readers will remember attending the windswept divisions on the cliff-top at HMS Harrier (RN Air Direction School and Met Schools) at Kete, near Dale, Pembrokeshire, where once a wind speed of 106 mph had been recorded during a hurricane in 1954?

Some of those who had served there returned at the end of April for an RN-themed event commemorating the 50th anniversary of the closing of Harrier, which started life in 1943 as HMS Goldcrest before changing names in 1948.

The Coastlands Local History Group were hosts for the exhibition, and at the church service at St James Church, standards were paraded from the Association of Wrens (Cardigan and Pembrokeshire Branch) and the RNA (Aberporth, Haven, and Pembroke Dock branches).

A guard of honour was provided by the TS Harrier Sea Cadet unit, from Milford Haven.

On return from the church service visitors tucked into a very generous home-baked Welsh spread.

The celebration cake, iced with a replica of the Harrier crest, was cut by Julia Clark, Chairwoman of the Association of Wrens, with a Naval officer's sword.

The exhibition in the Coronation Hall, Dale, remained open for four days, and included veterans' uniforms, memorabilia, and stories from ex-RN and WRNS personnel, together with related accounts from village residents.

The Cloudobservers Association (for ex-RN and WRNS Met Observers) also provided an impressive display, with two souvenir booklets especially created for the occasion – *Life at Kete* and *The Royal Navy at Dale*.

Further details from www.cloudobservers.co.uk

Virtual Branch is
ready for business

THERE is a new branch opening conveniently near you – literally right up your street.

The RNA's Virtual Branch initiative is due to get under way in the next few weeks, reaching out by phone to members who cannot get to meetings at existing branches.

Which means that someone who is perhaps housebound and who misses the comradeship of branch meetings can 'attend' a meeting over a phone line.

The idea is not new – telephone befriending and teleconferencing groups have been organised by the charity Community Network in the UK since 1990.

Speaking at an RNA Welfare seminar at HMS Nelson, Jennifer Reiter of the Community Network told delegates that one of the charity's most successful initiatives was the Seafarers Link.

Research in 2007 funded by the Maritime Charity Funding Group looked at the needs, welfare and dignity of thousands of older

seafarers and their dependents.

The results showed that such people could more easily become socially isolated and suffer poorer health than the average.

Seafaring was deemed to be more than just an occupation – it was a way of life, and after being away at sea mariners could find it difficult to integrate back into social groups ashore.

The result was a programme of fortnightly telephone conference groups, starting with two in Hull in June 2009, with further groups

starting in Wallasey and Cardiff within weeks.

They linked up to eight callers in a phone group, providing an opportunity to meet new people, share stories and swap experiences.

The scheme has since expanded into additional areas.

RNA National Welfare Advisor S/M Rita Lock told delegates that the RNA Virtual Branch is designed on similar lines, with free hour-long fortnightly telephone conferences which will bring male and female seafarers together to talk and share memories.

Each group will consist of up to eight members plus a trained facilitator or organiser who sets up the 'meeting', calls members at the appropriate time, manages the meeting and closes it after an hour.

Such meetings could be recorded, paving the way for researchers in the future to meet with individuals with a view to recording their memories for archive purposes.

As the link is made by phone, there would not need to be a geographic factor in membership, and future groups could be cross-specialisation, though there would be scope for branches catering for just stokers, WAFUs or other groups if the scheme is successful and expands.

S/M Rita said that Seafarers Link groups tended to start with some formality, but once members got to know each other there was a dramatic increase in dynamism; one group, which includes a former Wren, sees members swapping recipes, chatting about holidays and making plans to meet up in person.

"The RNA was looking to establish at least three groups initially, and to target isolated people," said S/M Rita, who said the first branch was due to go live shortly after *Navy News* went to press.

She added the Virtual Branches would be open to fully-paid-up full and associate members – and that they were looking for names for these branches.

For further details or information contact HQ on 023 9272 3747 or 023 9272 2983.

Gardens
formally
opened

DESPITE thunderstorms and heavy rain the day before, the sun shone brightly in Pershore for the official opening and blessing of the town's new Commemorative Garden.

Crowds of residents gathered to see the Northfield Caledonia Pipes and Drums lead representatives from various West Midland branches of both the RNA and the Royal British Legion, together with veterans from the Worcester Regiment, Mercian Regiment and a lieutenant commander from the Canadian Navy.

Joining them were both Pershore and Evesham Sea Cadets, St John's Ambulance and Pershore 1st Scouts.

In all over 500 people gathered round to see Pershore branch Chairman S/M Ted Annis and branch secretary S/M Trudy Burge lift the Union Flag to unveil the stone at precisely 3pm – specifically timed on the 66th anniversary of VE Day to match that when King George VI and Winston Churchill addressed the nation in a radio broadcast.

In the presence of the Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire, Michael Brinton, Rev Kenneth Crawford and Canon Richard Etheridge (RNA Chaplain) formally blessed and dedicated the stone in which a hand-painted commemoration plaque reads: 'May God protect our Armed Forces and those who willingly serve our Country. Long live our Blessed Sovereign'.

Immediately afterwards, the Lord Lieutenant of Worcester laid a floral tribute on behalf of the Queen in commemoration of Claude Choules, who died on May 5 aged 110 and was the very last surviving combatant from World War 1 (see opposite).

He was immediately followed by the Mayor of Pershore, Cllr Chris Parsons, who laid an anchor wreath to Claude on behalf of the Pershore RNA and people of the District – Claude was born not far from the town in 1901.

Trudy Burge and her father Ted Annis have led the steering group of this £8,500 project from its original concept back in 2005 to its opening, with Trudy latterly taking charge since Ted's health deteriorated last July.

In conjunction with Wychavon Council, the project was moved to its present location which many agree is the most perfect spot in the town, overlooking Pershore Abbey at the entrance to Abbey Park.

Speaking about commemorating Claude Choules, Trudy explained: "We learnt on Thursday morning that Claude had crossed the bar and the more I read about Claude on the Internet of how he actively shunned Remembrance parades, together with the fact that his family are calling on people to commemorate his long life, I just thought it was almost meant to happen at the time that we were opening this Commemorative Garden in his home town.

"After all, this is not a war memorial – Pershore's war memorial is in our beautiful Abbey and nothing will ever detract from that.

"This is a commemoration to our armed forces and people serving their country - it has been designed to be timeless and is meant for those no longer with us, those currently serving and those who may serve in the future."

Algerine visit

MEMBERS of the Algerines Association will be travelling to the Normandy coast early this month to attend the unveiling of a memorial to the minesweepers which were involved in the clearing of channels for the landing craft and other ships during the D-Day Landings.

Cyril Banks, a veteran of June 6 1944, will be amongst the party – he was serving on board HMS Ready of the 18th Minesweeper Flotilla at Gold Beach on D-Day.



● Pictured are some of the main guests in the wardroom of HMS Flying Fox before the 92nd annual dinner of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Old Comrades' Association, including the Lord Mayor of Bristol, Cllr C Smith, Association President Cdre G Wood RNR, Association Patron Maj Norman Ricketts RM, Cdr D Kay RNR and Lt Cdr M Borer of the Bath White Ensign OCA. Two Sea Cadets from Bristol (Knowle) unit and two Royal Marine Cadets from Bristol (Filton) unit paraded the Association's Colours before the dinner got under way

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our April edition (right) was the battleship HMS Queen Elizabeth.

And Peter Phillips, of Tiverton in Devon, was the winner of our £50 prize for identifying her.

This month's mystery ship (pictured above) was launched in late 1974 and went on to serve in the Falklands Conflict.

She was decommissioned by the Royal Navy in the mid-1990s and bought by Pakistan, for whom she continues to serve alongside sister frigates including PNS Tariq, Babur, Tippu Sultan and Khaibar.

What was her name, and what name did she assume when she joined the Pakistan Navy?

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH.



Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Closing date for entries is July 15 2011. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our August edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

Steady as she goes

THE outgoing Chairman of Cheshunt branch, S/M Victor Everest, was presented with a large plaque depicting a ship's wheel by his successor S/M Eric Robinson.

As Vice Chairman and Chairman of the branch, S/M Everest stepped down on reaching the age of 80 after 25 years of dedicated service.

The ship's wheel motif represents Victor's acumen in keeping the branch on a steady course and maintaining strong membership.

He also supported the HMS Ganges Association and the association for HMS Manxman, in which he served during the Suez Crisis in 1956.

Memorial honours
US aviators' sacrifice

THE efforts of a member of Cheshunt branch have resulted in the unveiling of a memorial to a gallant American air crew who died while ensuring their bomb-laden plane avoided civilian populations.

S/M Ernie Havers was a 15-year-old fireman on duty in August 1944 when a B-24 Liberator bomber of the 392nd Bombardment Group (Heavy) from RAF Wendling in Norfolk ran into trouble – various reports speak of multiple engine problems or a tail damaged in a collision with another bomber.

The crew did not bail out, but stayed with pilot Lt John Ellis USAF as he wrestled the stricken plane away from the streets of Waltham Cross and Cheshunt and crash-landed in a field at Maxwell's Farm.

The crash set the fully-loaded aircraft ablaze, and it exploded as firefighters rushed to the site.

Another eyewitness, Ron Bennett (who later went on to join the RN, rising to the rank of lieutenant commander) was the same age as Ernie when he and his father saw the Liberator in its death throes, recalling a sickening thud and a column of smoke followed later by an explosion and the sound of bullets going off.

In a submission to the Hertsmemories website (www.hertsmemories.org.uk) Ron also recalls three American fighters flying over the site shortly afterwards in a moving tribute to their fallen compatriots.

Ten American airmen died in the accident, but thanks to their sacrifice only one civilian was hurt, a young girl struck by debris who later recovered.

S/M Ernie, a seasoned firefighter even at the age of 15, and just coming off a night shift dealing with V-1 flying bombs, and although he had seen plenty

of the horrors of war he said the appalling scene of destruction was still seared into his mind despite the passing of almost seven decades.

He made a vow there and then that one day he would see a memorial created to "ten true gentlemen" who gave their lives to save hundreds of others.

Now, with the help of a local benefactor, that memorial to the crew has been unveiled at St Mary's School, just off Lieutenant Ellis Way, a road renamed in honour of the doomed pilot.

Present at the ceremony was Lt Ellis's daughter, Mrs Mary Lee Ellis-Hughes, not quite one year old when her father died, and granddaughters Michelle Hatata and Annette Todaro.

Representing the military were Col Sonny Blinkinsop USAF and Air Vice Marshal Herriman, and a Guard of Honour from the US Air Force base at Mildenhall.

Members of Cheshunt branch turned out in numbers, along with the Royal British Legion with their respective standards.

Cheshunt branch padre Rev Jane Dicker conducted the service, while S/M Ernie gave the dedication, which he entitled 'Beyond Courage', a title which is now being taken up as a charity to help injured servicemen.

Ernie spoke of the unsurpassed courage of the airmen, and bid everyone keep the words 'beyond courage' in their minds.

Mrs Hatata said that the service and dedication was "beautiful", adding: "We could not imagine as a family that today would be remembered so far from my grandfather's home in Kansas, and it is amazing that Ernie would carry this in his head for 67 years."

MYSTERY PICTURE 196

Name

Address

.....

.....

My answers

.....

Hark the Covenant

SO THE Armed Forces Covenant is here, writes *Kim Richardson, Chair NFF.* What does it mean?

To some of our families it will mean something, to others it is meaningless.

The Secretary of State for Defence, Dr Liam Fox, said that "Our understanding of the covenant will change over time, as will the way in which Government and society meet it."

"The framework we have set out today provides the flexibility we need so that not only the Government but all of society can fully pay the enormous debt they owe our Armed Forces, their families and our veterans."

We encourage you to read the detail on what they are saying they will do, get down into the weeds; know what the Government is undertaking to do for you and your family.

This is a difficult time for our families. Defence cuts have been made, and belts tightened.

The press are saying that we still haven't cut enough! I question where it is to come from and how much more there can be to take.

The country will step up to the mark and do its bit, of that I am confident, but the Government must do the same too.

Dr Fox's talk of the Covenant changing, flexibility and frameworks leaves me with a sense of nervousness.

We haven't seen what it will do in its current guise yet.

The NFF sit on the external reference group that will monitor the Covenant's delivery. Our job is to ensure that we give a balanced view – your view.

Where it is delivering well it will be acknowledged, but where it is not we will ask questions. Your job is to tell us what you want said.

The Armed Forces Covenant was published on May 16 2011. It sets the tone for Government policy aimed at improving the support available for the Armed Forces Community.

The Covenant outlines the Government's aspiration that the Armed Forces Community should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services, as well as consider special treatment for the injured and bereaved, as proper return for their sacrifice.

The announcements build on work undertaken by its predecessor the Service Personnel Command Paper.

The key points are:

■ An increase in Council Tax Relief to 50 per cent for those deployed on eligible operations

■ Launching the Community Covenant scheme

■ A new fund of £30 million Community Covenant Grant to support the scheme over four years

■ A Pupil Premium for Service children

■ An additional fund of £3 million per year to support state schools catering for significant numbers of Service children including children of Reservists

■ Launching a veterans' information service to provide support on health issues including mental health.

■ Launching a Veterans Card to ease access to commercial discounts or privileges and to consider how this could be expanded to include Service families

■ Working to ensure AFCS payments are not required to be used to pay for social care

■ A guarantee that veterans suffering serious genital injuries

receive three cycles of IVF

■ Working with banks and building societies on how they lend to members of the Armed Forces

■ A Ministerially-chaired meeting with key stakeholders to explore ways to improve access to housing

■ Launching a Troops To Teachers scheme

The Government has now also published its full response to the **Independent Taskforce** report, which was used to develop many of the measures shown above, including the Community Covenant scheme and Veterans Card.

Full details of that report are available on line via www.NFF.org.uk

Through an amended **Armed Forces Bill** the Government will set out the principles that lie behind the Armed Forces Covenant; that members of the Armed Forces Community do not suffer disadvantage as a result of their service and that where appropriate they receive special treatment.

These core principles will be written into law for the first time.

The **Armed Forces Bill** already sets out a requirement for the Defence Secretary to lay before Parliament an annual Armed Forces Covenant report on how the covenant is being implemented.

This will cover key areas of housing, healthcare and education, but also other areas of scope mentioned in the Armed Forces Covenant.

In April this year, enhancements were made to the scheme which offers free further and higher education to qualifying Service leavers, with the qualifying period being reduced to four years from six and removed altogether for those who are medically discharged.

Also in April, **Armed Forces Bereavement Scholarship Scheme** was launched. The aim of the scheme is to give the children of those who have died in the service of their country a head start in life by enabling them to obtain a university degree or further education training.

In June last year, **Operational Allowance** was doubled resulting in personnel receiving a tax-free sum of £5,281 for a six-month tour in an eligible location;

In July, changes were made to **Rest and Recuperation** policies to ensure that this time is maximised with days missed in the UK due to operational reasons or delays on the airbridge being added to Post Operational Tour Leave;

Murrison Report: In addition to these positive steps, we are taking forward the recommendations made by Dr Andrew Murrison in his report *Fighting Fit – a mental health plan for Servicemen and veterans.*

With a focus on improving identification of mental health problems and better outreach, assessment and information services, the report set out 13 recommendations to encourage engagement with serving and former Service personnel with mental health problems, including a 24-hour helpline and 30 full-time equivalent veterans' mental health nurses in NHS Mental Health Trusts across England.

The Government accepted all of Dr Murrison's recommendations and the MOD is now working closely with the Department of Health to take them forward.

The Covenant is supported by a second document: *The Armed*



Forces

Covenant: Today and Tomorrow which sets out in detail the steps currently being taken to observe the obligations of the Covenant and the future measures which will be delivered over the coming weeks and months.

The Government has now set out its full response to the report. There are several other positive measures coming forward.

These are:

■ **Community Covenant** to encourage local community support for the Armed Forces Community. The Government has pledged £30 million over the next four years to support this scheme.

■ **A CDS Commendation Scheme** to reward those in the community who do the most for the Armed Forces

The Armed Forces Bill currently going through Parliament contains a clause requiring the Secretary of State for Defence to lay before Parliament an annual **Armed Forces Covenant Report**.

The report will set out how Ministers are meeting their obligations to support the Armed Forces Community in key areas such as healthcare, housing and education.

The Government plans to bring forward an amendment also requiring them to address the principles that members of the Armed Forces Community do not suffer disadvantage as a result of their service and that, where appropriate, they receive special treatment.

These are the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant and will be written into statute for the first time.

MOD will consult widely in the preparation of the report – internally through the Chain of Command, and with external stakeholders.

They will be interested in evidence about how the whole range of public bodies is performing, not just Whitehall Departments.

Before laying the Report before the House, the government will give the members of the External Reference Group from outside Government an opportunity to comment on it, and we will publish any observations alongside the report.

As we said at the top of the page, the NFF sits round the table as part of the **External Reference Group** – tell us what you want to say.

The full details of the announcements and how these may impact on you, your family and future plans can be found on our website www.NFF.org.uk.

Your experiences form the basis of our discussions, to get in touch with the NFF:

Tel: 02392 654374.

E-mail: admin@nff.org.uk.

Write:

Castaway House, 3
11 Twyford Avenue,
Portsmouth
PO2 8RN.



● Type 23 HMS Argyll

DSMT visit Argyll

TYPE 23 frigate HMS Argyll has been on its way to the Netherlands as part of her sea trials when, due to unforeseen circumstances, another vessel had to take that berth spot, and the ship was diverted to Wallsend, Newcastle upon Tyne.

However, every cloud has a silver lining, and this was an ideal opportunity for the Newcastle based ATLAS DII(F) Deployed Service Management Team (DSMT) to make an impromptu visit aboard on March 21, writes *Andy Simpson, Deployed Service Management Team Subject Matter Expert Lead.*

The Deployed Service Management Team is the single point of contact for the entire DII(F) Deployed solution.

We provide support to the on-board Military Service Providers (MSP) for both the Maritime and Land solutions in the Deployed environment.

Our help desk is the first point of call if a Military Service Provider cannot resolve an issue locally.

The Team operates 24/7/365 and the help desk itself is supported by a team of SMEs who deal with any escalations that cannot be resolved at first point of contact with the help desk.

Due to communications issues, especially via satellite links, a lot of the contact with remote Military Service Providers is by email or MS Communicator, which are delivered by the DII(F) Deployed solution.

DII Afloat, or Maritime Deployed, is the programme that is introducing DII(F) across the Navy's entire Fleet and replaces the old NavyStar system.

It provides a consistent IT infrastructure and platform to each fitted-out vessel that brings applications into line between the Fixed and Deployed environments as much as is possible "from business-space to battle-space".

It allows a ship's company to access information and work with their colleagues, whether on board or on shore, and is a key capability when working on Joint Operations.

Maritime Deployed provides a whole range of functionality including MS Outlook, MS Office and MS Communicator, which can be used across the Fixed environment and with other Deployed vessels.

The infrastructure also supports hosted applications such as logistics and engineering management systems, planning

tools, Magellan maps and the JPA Personnel system.

New software, system updates and solutions to known defects are built and tested in the implementation space by ATLAS engineers.

They are then validated by the customer before being signed off as suitable for live in the 10C process, then are released to the live environment.

Once they are in the live system, the Deployed Service Management Team takes over the live support.

The Deployed Service Management Team has been supporting HMS Argyll since July 2010 when she completed her refit in Rosyth, which included a Communication and Information Systems upgrade from NavyStar to DII(F) Maritime Deployed.

HMS Argyll's visit to Newcastle was a really valuable opportunity for the team to engage with the ship's staff face-to-face and get a full appreciation of the environment, priorities and pressures the Military Support Personnel for DII(F) face on a day to day basis when supporting their new system.

On-board, the system is primarily supported by PO(CIS) Paul Gerry and POET (WE) Liam Walmsley and they proved to be the perfect hosts for the Deployed Service Management Team which included members from the Help Desk, Release Management, Implementation Support, Subject Matter Experts and the Subject Matter Expert Lead for the team.

To be able to see the equipment in situ and aboard the vessel, when it is normally encountered only remotely, really did help put into perspective the support the Deployed Service Management Team provides in maintaining the functionality of the systems and in being the single escalation point for the Military Service Providers on a 24/7 basis.

It is not until you see hardware, network and systems working as a whole that the scope of the project and what has been delivered truly comes to light.

This was an invaluable chance to put faces to names and build up the relationships between the Deployed Service Management Team and HMS Argyll's Military Service Providers.

The offer of a reciprocal visit to the Deployed Service Management Team office was extended to ship staff, but unfortunately the next day departure of HMS Argyll prevented it.

where
to look

DEFENCE INTERNAL BRIEFS
30/11: Publication of Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2010 Report: The Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2010 Report was published on March 31.

37/11: Changes to the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme are now effective: From May 9 2011 onwards the new Armed Forces Compensation takes effect. Any service personnel who become injured or ill as a result of their service will now be entitled to an even more comprehensive package.

38/11: The New Employment Model (NEM): The new NEM aims to promote greater stability in service life balanced against the requirement to deliver operational capability.

39/11: Publication of the Armed Forces Covenant: The Government recognises the need to do more to ensure our Armed Forces, veterans and their families have the support they need and are treated with the dignity they deserve. The Armed Forces Covenant, published in May, sets the tone for Government policy aimed at improving the support available for the Armed Forces Community.

40/11: Armed Forces Bereavement Scholarship Scheme: Last year, as part of a programme of measures intended to rebuild the Military Covenant, the Coalition Programme for Government included an undertaking to provide university and further education scholarships for children of Service personnel who have been killed on active duty since 1990. The MOD launched this government-funded scheme on April 8.

GALAXIES
Galaxy 13-2011: New Naval Internet website and the requirement to drive the news agenda

Galaxy 14-2011: Launch of the amended Armed Forces Compensation Scheme: Personal note from 2SL

Galaxy 15-2011: Second Sea Lord's Priorities for the 2011 Summer Term

Galaxy 16-2011: Launch of the Armed Forces Covenant DINs

DIN 2011 DIN01-121: Accommodation Booking in the Portsmouth Area – This DIN supersedes DIN 2011 DIN01-002

DIN 2011 DIN01-116: London Pride Event – Saturday July 2 2011

DIN 2011 DIN01-115: Revised Maternity Policy for Servicewomen in the Regular Armed Forces – This DIN supersedes DIN 2007 DIN02-005, DIN 2007 DIN02-190 and DIN 2008 DIN01-249

DIN 2011 DIN03-018: Navy Command Policy for the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence of the Naval Service

RNTMs
Issue 07/11 RNTM 128/11: Issue of BR 18 and the change to Trophy Accounting procedures

Issue 07/11 RNTM 130/11: Royal Naval Armourers Spares List – Items to be carried as onboard spares

Issue 07/11 RNTM 131/11: Disposal of removable media up to and including Impact Level 5

Issue 07/11 RNTM 134/11: Royal Navy and Royal Marines Combat Shooting Competition in the Central Skill-at-arms Meeting (CENTSAM) 2011

Issue 08/11 RNTM 141/11: Seagoers Leave – clarification of policy

Issue 08/11 RNTM 142/11: Admiralty Interview Board – visits by Commanding and Divisional Officers

where
to look

Compensation changes in depth

INCREASES in payments have been made to military personnel who are injured or become ill as a result of their service.

The changes came into effect on May 9 following a revision of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS).

Enhancements include an average rise of 25 per cent in lump-sum payments (except in respect to the top award recently doubled to £570,000); a rise in the maximum award for mental illness from £48,875 to £140,000 to reflect the impact of the most serious conditions; and a rise in Guaranteed Income Payments (GIPs) for those who are seriously injured, GIP being a monthly, tax-free, inflation-proof income payable from discharge for life.

GIP increases reflect the lasting effect of more serious injuries on promotion prospects and on the ability to work to the age of 65.

The changes have been made following a review which Lord Boyce, who as Admiral Sir Michael Boyce was Chief of the Defence Staff, was asked to undertake in 2009 in consultation with Service charities.

His review was published last year. While he found the AFCS fundamentally sound he made several recommendations, all of which were accepted and which have resulted in a total of 69 changes to the scheme.

Apart from the enhancements listed above, the changes include:

- Compensation now to be paid for each injury;

- Extension of time limits for making a claim from five to seven years for injury and from one to three years for bereavement;

- Increase in the maximum bereavement grant which means

that dependants may now receive up to £37,500.

- Increase in the majority of awards for hearing loss;

- Provision for awards to be reviewed beyond the ten-year point;

- The power to pay for medical costs for seriously injured personnel who move abroad within 12 months of leaving the Services;

- Creation of an Independent Medical Expert Group to provide evidence-based comment on medical aspects of the scheme, its first report to be published soon;

- Creation of a comprehensive training and communication package to promote awareness and understanding of the scheme.

The AFCS was introduced on April 6, 2005 to compensate Service personnel or their dependants for injury, illness or death attributable to their service. For any injuries sustained before the scheme was introduced, compensation is awarded under the War Pensions Scheme.

All Regular and Reserve personnel are eligible to claim under the AFCS for any injury caused by service, including those caused while training or taking part in approved military sports.

All those who previously received an award under the AFCS will have their awards revised in line with the new increases.

About 10,000 cases are being reviewed by the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA), which delivers the scheme, and previous claimants are being informed of the increases.

More information is available through DIB 2011/37, the AFCS website at www.mod.uk/afcs; or the SPVA website at Veterans-UK.

Navy Command Review reaches next stage

THE STRATEGIC Security and Defence Review announcement in October 2010 began the biggest change programme in Defence for a generation.

Alongside the much-talked about reductions in the front line capability of the Royal Navy were a series of announcements on Service manpower.

For the Naval Service this was the overall reduction in the trained strength from around 35,000 to just over 30,000 within the next four years, to be followed by a further reduction of 1,000 by 2020.

As well as this headline figure for the RN/RM, an overall reduction in Non-Front Line of 25 per cent for each of the Services and their civilian counter-parts was also announced, as a subset of the overall reduction figures for each. The Navy Command Review, or NCR as it is known, was established in November 2010.

Its purpose is to take stock of the directed manpower drawdowns within the Non-Front Line area of Navy Command and draw those requirements together with the other Defence change programmes that have resulted from SDSR.

The Review is focused on the posts within Non-Front Line and looking at where and how the required reductions may be made.

The requirement to shed individuals from the Service and Civil Service is being dealt with through the respective manpower planning organisations, with the Naval Service redundancy programme providing part of the drawdown solution for military manpower.

Over the last few months, the NCR has been examining current Navy Command structures and processes.

This undertaking has been based upon the organisation that emerged from the Fleet Transformation programme of 2007 and is being used as the baseline from which study work will move forward.

The next stage of work will be to test the required manpower reductions against the baseline structures and processes to better understand where future change will be required to achieve the necessary post reductions.

This was due to be done through a management event at Whale Island in May 2011, as *Navy News* goes to press.

At this stage, no decisions will be taken on any specific post as the NCR is assessing how the manpower targets may be met; it is anticipated that decisions on posts will be made in late 2011 and implemented through 2012.

Once the outcome of the May event has been analysed, Navy Command will then be well placed ahead of the announcement of the outcomes from the Defence Reform Review.

This announcement, due in July 2011, will lay out changes to the Defence High Level Operating Model.

At this stage it is not clear what those changes will be, but it is anticipated that certain roles and responsibilities that both the MOD Centre and Front Line Commands currently conduct will be revised and some functions possibly even moved across organisational boundaries.



● Navy Command Headquarters, Leach Building

Once that clarity is received, then the next phase of the NCR can commence and run over the Autumn period.

It is during the Autumn that the external changes will be analysed and their effect on Navy Command assessed.

Once that has occurred, the process of assessing how best to restructure Navy Command, whilst meeting the requirements of Defence, achieving the necessary post reductions and continuing to support front-line outputs will occur.

Inevitably this will require a degree of redesign of the Non-Front Line parts of the Command, but this will be from a known baseline and will continue to use the well established 'Lean' processes successfully utilised during Transformation.

Thereafter, an implementation

plan will be developed in early 2012.

Obviously there is a large amount of uncertainty and change across both the Naval Service and Defence as a whole in the wake of last year's SDSR.

However, Navy Command is well placed to deal with this due to the recent experience of Transformation in 2007.

Whilst Defence now embarks on that Transformational path, NCR is focussed on developing the post-Transformation 'Lean' structures Navy Command has and guiding the Command through a process of transition over the coming months.

As significant milestones in the Programme are reached, further briefing material will be issued to ensure all personnel remain abreast of developments and where business may change in their area.

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Stable families at the core of Naval life

A STUDY to promote greater domestic stability in Service life and to look at support and compensation to balance mobility requirements has been set up by the Ministry of Defence.

In response to a Government commitment in the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) White Paper published last year, a ten-year programme will develop a New Employment Model (NEM) for Service personnel.

The current employment model has changed little over the past 40 years and needs to be improved to better meet the needs of today's Armed Forces.

NEM will report its findings to the Defence Board in 2012 and once a package of options have been agreed they will be implemented from 2014-15 with some measures taking up to ten years to complete.

Five project teams will focus on use of manpower and terms of service, financial and non-financial conditions of service, accommodation, training and education, and NEM delivery.

NEM will fulfill the Government's commitment to ensure that service in the Armed Forces remains attractive in the rapidly evolving employment market, and will be able to, offer its people the adventure, excitement and responsibility that other employers find difficult to match.

While continuing to support mobility where essential to Defence needs, it will better balance the demands on Service people and their families to provide the greater domestic stability central to spouses' employment

and children's education.

By offering them genuine, but realistic choices about the way they live and pursue their careers, NEM will ensure that personnel are valued and respected.

The project teams will examine the difference between what the Services offer against expectations of personnel and their families, the issues faced in a climate of reducing resources, and operational requirements for greater agility, flexibility and joint capability in a smaller force structure.

Most personnel should enjoy much greater stability, but there will be operational requirements to assign people to posts in different places, and a package of conditions will be developed to support both those aspects of Service life.

Personnel, their families and veterans will be provided with a welfare support package including access to services from Departmental, wider public and charity sources.

Finally, NEM will deliver an alternative approach to accommodation which will better meet future needs for good quality, affordable housing during service and in transition to civilian life.

Questions and answers

Q: What does the NEM mean for me?

NEM is an opportunity to update terms and conditions of service (TACOS), which include pay, pensions, allowances and accommodation to meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's Armed Forces.

It is a long-term programme which will introduce changes to TACOS over ten years. The changes will affect different people at different times and in different



● Families at Devonport welcome home HMS Cornwall from her last deployment
Picture: LA(Phot) Shaun Barlow

stages of their careers.

Significant changes, in the short term are unlikely.

Q: What does the NEM mean to me as a Reservist?

NEM is an opportunity to bring terms and conditions of service up to date for Regular and Reserve personnel so that they meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's modern Armed Forces.

It will be designed to support a whole-force approach to manning. Simplified and harmonised TACOS will make employment in the Armed Forces

less complicated. Reserves are an integral part of Defence, and NEM will consider their civilian commitments, their families and employers.

Q: When will we know more information?

The next formal announcement is expected late in 2012, once the NEM projects have reported and a way forward has been agreed by the Defence Board.

Information will be continually available on the Defence Intranet and through single Service communication channels.

Q: Will I be consulted?

Each project team will consult widely throughout 2011-12. You may not be consulted personally but the teams will consult Service personnel of all ranks and take their views into account when producing their findings.

Q: Is it just a cost saving exercise?

No. The current employment model is not affordable and does not meet the needs of today's modern Armed Forces.

This is an opportunity to make the employment model affordable

in future years and provide a way to better balance the demands placed on our people and their families now and in the future.

Q: Will I really be able to make choices that suit my lifestyle?

NEM will ensure that we value and respect our people by offering them genuine, but realistic choices about the way they live their lives and pursue their careers, while continuing to support Defence requirements.

■ See more in DIB 2011/38: The New Employment Model

2SL's priorities

THE SECOND Sea Lord, Admiral Charles Montgomery, has outlined his priorities for the upcoming period, saying: "Strong leadership at all levels and honest, open communication with our people will remain fundamental if we are to maintain their trust and respect."

The senior officer's strategic objectives are clear:

■ Deliver Naval Service (NS) Personnel to meet Defence's requirements for current operations.

■ Deliver people and training

Pride in uniform

AUTHORITY has again been granted this year for Service personnel to take part in the annual London Pride event in uniform.

The London Pride event, which includes a parade in central London, celebrates equality and diversity, particularly in respect of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. It will be held this year on Saturday, July 2.

to generate for Op Herrick 14.

■ Manage the personnel drawdown to meet SDSR targets while maintaining the Moral Component of Operational Capability (MC of OC).

■ Contribute comprehensive and balanced advice to enable the best possible outcomes from PR11.

Further details of the admiral's priorities, including the critical success factors and the short-term priorities can be found in Galaxy 03-2011: Second Sea Lord's Priorities for the 2011 Spring Term.

Personnel marching in uniform will be considered to be on duty representing their Service and may claim duty travel costs (but not subsistence) within the UK, subject to budget manager approval.

A high degree of discipline and military bearing is expected from Service personnel taking part.

Those who fail to meet the appropriate Service dress will be removed from the parade, and following the march those marching in uniform must change into civilian dress if they intend to return to the pride event.

Naval Service personnel must register their interest with the RN co-ordinator for the event – Lt Cdr Mandy McBain RN (military tel. 93832 5517).

Watch out for *not* Jack the lad

SOME users of online dating websites have reported making contact with others claiming to be British Army soldiers on operations in Afghanistan or Iraq.

Typically, they have reported building a relationship over time, through correspondence and exchange of photos etc – but eventually there is an attempt to defraud when the spoof soldier either asks for bank account details to transfer a significant amount of money, or by asking for money to enable them to go on leave.

The former is a long-established scam (known as 'Nigerian money scam' or 'advance-fee fraud') while the latter is a new, but outright, con.

British forces personnel on Operations do not have to pay to go on leave, or to pay for flights, or replacement personnel.

Anyone in such a position should cease all communications and contact their local law enforcement agency.

Remember: people online may not be who they say they are.

Hydro chair

MARKETING specialist Sandra Rogers has been appointed Chair of the UK Hydrographic Office. Sandra has been on the UKHO Board since 2002 and was appointed interim Chair in 2009.

Sandra, currently a Cisco Director, has led marketing teams nationally and internationally, and has been in the IT and telecommunications industries for over 30 years.

A farewell to Sir Henry

A MEMORIAL Service for Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach will be held in Winchester Cathedral on Friday June 17 at 2pm.

Admission to the service will be by ticket only.

Reserves in transformation

The UK's Reserve Forces have been the focus of much attention and some speculation over the last three years.

The Strategic Review of Reserves published in 2009 suggested that the UK's Reserve Forces needed to move away from a post-cold war structure and mindset and adapt more to meet the current needs of Defence.

The Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), announced in 2010, looked towards the future environment of conflict, threat and national security and in considering the role and structure for all of our armed forces directed that a further study of our Reserve Forces was needed to ensure they were properly structured to meet the needs of Defence up to 2020 and beyond.

The study, known as Future Reserves 2020 is now under way and will explore the role of Reserves within the context of the 'Whole Force Concept'.

The Whole Force Concept is defined as the 'sustainable manning of a balanced, resilient and fully integrated force structure that may comprise Regular and Reserve Service personnel, contractors and civilians, optimised to deliver the people component of operational capability, at declared readiness and defined risk, in a cost effective and affordable manner.'

The study presents an opportunity to examine how Defence use the Reserve Forces and make best use of their skills and capabilities whilst moving towards a more efficient and affordable structure overall.

Organised into three phases, with Phase 1 completing in March



Drafty's corner

2011, the Study will develop a common understanding of the context in which Reserves will be used in the future and define strategic principles around which the balance between regular and non-regular manpower should be designed.

Phase 2 will focus on the Reserve force structures needed to complement the regular force and meet operational requirements.

Later, in Phase 3, running up to the delivery of its findings in Summer 2011, the Study will develop a detailed concept and outline plan for the implementation of new single-Service structures.

Future Reserves 2020 is therefore looking at a fundamental revision of the Reserves roles and structures, to complement the Regular Force's reorganisation rather than just making extant roles and structures more

efficient, which was the remit of the Strategic Review of Reserves back in 2009.

It will identify what Reservists' skills and capabilities are required in future to ensure Defence is making the best use of its assets and that Reservists' experiences remain valuable and high quality for the Armed Forces, the individuals and their civilian employers.

The emerging Whole Force Concept and the Future Reserves 2020 study will therefore redefine the relationship between the Reserves and the Regular Service in coming years.

This is therefore an extremely exciting time for the personnel in Naval Personnel Team (Reserves), the team that facilitate the Career Management, employment and administration of the Reserve Forces.

This Reserve Force consisting of the Royal Naval Reserve (Volunteer Reserve) and the Regular Reserve Forces (ex-regular personnel with a Reserve Liability) already augment to support the regular Service in niche specialisations and Operational Pinch Point areas.

Mechanisms of employment include Mobilised Service, Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) and Part Time Reserve Service.

In addition to facilitating these, the team are the Subject Matter Experts on the Reserve Forces Act and are a useful point of contact for all personnel leaving the regular Service should they have any queries on their Reserve Liability.

Specific questions on FTRS can be directed to 023 9262 8744/8747/8746, Reserve Liability 8770 and Mobilised Service 8965.

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Reporting from the Fleet



NEPTUNE HAS HIS TRIDENT

Deaths

Marine Nigel 'Deano' Dean Mead. Lima Company Fire Support Group 42 Cdo. Died from wounds sustained from an IED strike in Helmand. May 15. Aged 19. Further information can be found on page 4.

Lt Cdr Ian Molyneux. Weapons Engineering Officer HM Submarine Astute. April 8. Aged 36.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach. First Sea Lord during the Falklands war. April 26. Aged 87. See Heroes of the RN article page 12.

Rear Admiral Nicholas Goodhart. Emerged from conventional naval training and his engineering degree course at Keyham, Plymouth 1940 and appointed as an engineroom watchkeeper to the carrier Formidable 1941, however she was badly damaged during the evacuation from Crete and after patching went to America for repair. Transferred to Dido (also under repair at Brooklyn navy yard) and served in her for two years taking part in operations in support of the Eighth Army in North Africa, convoys to Malta and assaults on Sicily and Italy. Selected for flying training, he went to Canada and was awarded his wings in 1944. After learning to deck-land Wildcats he was flown out to Trincomalee to join operations to clear the remnants of the Japanese occupation of Burma and Malaya. He was flying Hellcats in 896 Squadron and on one occasion forced to ditch into the Strait of Malacca because of engine failure. 1946 he joined the Empire Test Pilot School at Cranfield then was senior pilot of 700 Squadron at Yeovilton teaching naval pilots maintenance test flying; in 1949 he was selected for an exchange tour as a test pilot in the US. On his return he was appointed technical secretary to the chief Naval representative in the Ministry of Supply and promoted to commander in 1953. His invention of the mirror deck landing sight was considered to be his greatest contribution to the Navy for which he was

awarded an undisclosed sum from the Admiralty. After a tour at Yeovilton he went to the air warfare department at the Admiralty 1958 then to sea as staff aviation officer to the Flag Officer aircraft carriers. Promoted to captain 1962 he was appointed project manager for the Sea Dart missile. A student at the Imperial Defence College in 1965 and director of aircraft maintenance and repair in the Admiralty until 1968. Promoted to commodore and then rear admiral he was director of defence operational requirements and finally military deputy to the head of defence sales. He was appointed CB in 1972 and retired in 1973. A member of the Royal Aeronautical Society. April 9. Aged 91.

Lt Cdr William Davidson. Called up and commissioned into the RNVF he underwent intensive six-week training and on D-Day commanded a craft which landed troops on Sword Beach. On his return from Normandy he joined Combined Operations and after further training was sent to the Far East as first-lieutenant of Landing Craft Infantry 166. His first action was the amphibious attack on Rangoon by British and Indian forces in May 1945 (Operation Dracula). After the surrender at Singapore he stayed on to assist the French in their attempts to resume their colonial administration of French Indo-China; landing French commandos on enemy strong points in the Mekong delta he frequently came under heavy artillery and sniper fire and was awarded a Croix de Guerre for his calm courage. He went on to serve in Scotia, the Scottish Division of the RNR. March 19. Aged 86.

William 'Bill' Newcombe. Naval Airman Armourer. Served 812 Naval Air Squadron of the 14th Carrier Air Group, Glory 1951-53 (Korea) and Illustrious. Member of 14th Carrier Air Group and HMS Glory Associations. April 10. Aged 80.

Donald Lord. CPO AH. 22 years service and Korean veteran. Long serving member of HMS Ocean Association as Committee

1971-1981-1991-2001 THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES We flick back through the pages of Navy News to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



● The future HMS Sheffield in build alongside Cardiff

June 1971

AS the first of the new Sheffield-class destroyers, the eponymous HMS Sheffield, awaited her launch, it was announced that two more of her class were to be ordered from the shipbuilders Cammell Laird, in Birkenhead.

The first ship of the design had been built by Vickers at Barrow-in-Furness and was due to be launched by the Queen in June.

The Sheffield Class ships had a displacement of about 3,500 tons and were powered by a combination of Tyne gas turbines for cruising and Olympus gas turbines for full power.

June 1981

A MARINER'S compass found by divers searching the wreck of the Mary Rose in Spithead was believed to be the earliest surviving example in the Western world.

The compass was retrieved from a small cabin in the bow of the ship, which sank off Portsmouth in 1545.

The Prince of Wales, President of the Mary Rose Trust, was due to make his fourth dive on the wreck in June, and during his visit to Portsmouth was to be briefed on the feasibility of bringing the historic hulk to the surface intact.

June 1991

THE Royal Naval Benevolent Trust was celebrating the opening of its new headquarters, Castaway House.

Built at a cost of about half a million pounds, the new building was on the site of the old RN School of Motoring, at Tipner, Portsmouth.

It was called Castaway House to commemorate the origins of the site, as the Naval Employment Agency, which bought the plot in 1907, was managed by a small group of naval officers who formed the Castaway Club 'for the purpose of training men of the RN and RM to fit them for employment on leaving the service.'

June 2001

TWENTY teams of sailors were working long shifts in South Wales and Devon to help cope with the foot-and-mouth outbreak.

The teams of sailors, known as Jack Force, co-ordinated the work of farmers, vets, slaughtermen and hauliers and frequently had the grim task of overseeing the mass culls of farm animals.

From their HQ in a tax office in Cardiff, the South Wales contingent worked round the clock, sometimes putting in 20-hour days to help manage the crisis.

Member, Social Secretary and finally Deputy Chairman. Aged 78.

Arthur Walker. Able Seaman. Served 1940-46 in Jamaica. April 6. Aged 87.

Fred W Smith. Stoker 1. Combined Operations. Served 1943-46 in Landing Craft operating from Cyclops, Dinosaur and Sandhurst. Royal Naval Engineerineroom Association, Colwyn Bay. April 8. Aged 88.

Lewis Derrick Bean. CPO Engine Room Artificer. Served 1942-56 at Fiskard and Zest, Black Swan (Korea), Eagle, Meon, Gay Chariteer, Jewel and Forth. Fiskard and Black Swan Associations. April 8. Aged 84.

James 'Geordie' Purvis. CPO Mechanician. Served 1950-73 in Albion, Relentless, Penelope, Howe, Chaplet, Belfast, Owen, Hardy, Dampier, Ursa, Fearless, Glamorgan and Tenby. April 18. Aged 78.

Derek Lovesey. AB. Served in Skipjack. Algerines Association. February 28. Aged 83.

Cdr Patrick Ramsden. Served in Magicienne. Algerines Association. April 25. Aged 88.

William 'Bill' Boddy. HMS Morecambe Bay Association. February.

William Foster Cowles. PO Cook(S). Served 1946-68 in Vanguard, Tyne, Russell, Mercury, Chichester, Daedalus, Ulster, Victory, Albion, Dalrymple, Upton, Vernon, Sultan and Collingwood. April 28. Aged 82.

Edward 'Ted' 'Pat' Page. AB GL2(A). Training Ship Arethusa 1960-63. Served 1963-74 in Ganges, Protector, Hardy, Phoebe, Reclaim and Excellent. April. Aged 63.

James W A Cowell. NAM1(AE). Served 1956-67. Essex branch Fleet Air Arm Association. April 9. Aged 70.

Leslie Cooke. NA2. Served 1943-46. Life member of the Fleet Air Arm Association, Great Yarmouth branch. April 6.

Richard 'Dick' Bridges. CPO MEA. Served in Ark Royal and an Instructor aboard Manxman. May 5. Aged 67.

Howard Llewellyn Rogers. Served WW2 in Abdiel and Albatross. Recalled reservist 1952. Fast Minelayers Association. March 18. Aged 87.

June Elizabeth Jones (née Gibson). Wren RP. Joined Dauntless 1969 and served at Dryad 1969-70 where she met her husband, then Warrior (Northwood) 1970-71. May 7. Aged 61.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

John 'Jan' Alfred Charles Kiff. OEMN1. Served 1955-56 in St Kitts (Suez) then 1957-78 in submarines Auriga, Grampus, Resolution and Swiftsure. Forthcoming posthumous novel *The Barents Incident* to be published summer 2011. Exeter Submariners Association, Life member Newton Abbot RNA 1979-2009, Chairman 1994-2009 and more recently Life Vice-president. February 25. Aged 72.

David Hickling. CPO Writer. Served 1957-79 (after National Service in the Army) in Meon, Yarmouth, Bacchante, Scylla and five and a half years in HMY Britannia completing two world tours; also spent time at the Admiralty. Staunch supporter of Bishops Stortford branch and latterly on RNA Headquarters roll. March 8. Aged 82.

Robert 'Bob' Albert Embleton. Served 1938-53. Many theatres of war including Malta convoys, Palestine and Russian Convoys. Met and married his wife Pat (WRNS) while ship's company at Gamecock (RNAS Station). Isle of Sheppey branch. March 16. Aged 88.

Ronald Nichols. Served in Sheffield on Russian convoys and in Norway and Australia. Joined Bourne RNA 1987 and served as branch treasurer 1988-96. April 16. Aged 87.

Edward 'Ted' Smith. PO Air Electrical branch FAA. Joined the RN 1946 and served for 22 years in Eagle and Bulwark. Whilst in Bulwark he was seconded to the jungles helicopter squadron that operated out of Borneo during the Indonesian confrontation. St Helens RNA and FAA Association and one time secretary of the St Helen's branch of the FAA Association. April 9. Aged 83.

Rex 'Nobby' Clark. PO RP1. CPO Postal Reserves. Joined as a Boy Seaman at St Vincent 1954 and served in Ark Royal, Superb, Defender and Devonshire (first commission). Kings Lynn RNA. Vice Chairman and editor of the D Boats Association also member of HMS Superb, St Vincent and Postal Reserves Associations. April 15. Aged 72.

John Winder. PO. Served 1942-46 in Minesweepers. Founder member of Carlisle and District branch. April 26. Aged 87.

Claude Choules. CPO. During a 41-year career in the Royal Navy that spanned both wars he served in Revenge, witnessing the surrender of the German Imperial Navy in 1918 and the scuttling of the fleet in Scapa Flow. Seconded to the Australian navy in 1926 and remained in the force for 30 years. Last veteran of WW1. Perth, Western Australia RNA. May 5. Aged 110. See page 28.

Reg Griffiths. EM. Served 1950-52 in Whitesand Bay. Hanworth branch. March whilst on holiday in Gran Canaria. Aged 80.

Nigel Edward Francis 'Ted' Haines. PO Mechanician. Served 1954-66 in Raleigh, Charity, Cleopatra, Bulwark (salvage of Melika/Ferdinand and Gilabert collision off Ras al Hadd), Sultan, Murray, Victorious and Maidstone. Rockingham and District, Australia branch treasurer for five years and Chairman since 1998. May 4.

Roy Gibbs. PO Air. Served 1943-46. Training completed in Canada prior to sailing with the British Pacific Fleet on board HMS Indefatigable (820 Squadron, Avengers). Joined Daedalus branch Fleet Air Arm Association (2010) after the Telegraphist Air Gunners Association (TAGs) discontinued, member of Orpington RBL and vice chairman of Bromley RNA. April 12. Aged 86.

Marian Norman (née Francis). PO Writer. Served 1945-54 in Drake, Victory, Phoenixia (St Angelo) and Dauntless. Eastbourne branch. April 29. Aged 85.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION

H L 'Bill' Dartford. L/Sea LTO. Submarine service 1940-44 in Sealion and Seadog. Essex branch. Aged 90.

C 'Cyril' Sothcott. CERA. Submarine service 1941-46 in Satyr, Saga, Sanguine, Tireless, Token, Solent and Aeneas. Portsmouth branch. Aged 89.

G E 'Al' Spencer. Sto.Mech. Submarine service 1953-56 in Amphion. Gosport branch. Aged 79.

LST & LANDING CRAFT ASSOCIATION

G Henry. Served in LCG(L)22 and LCTs 303, 399 and 637. Ruislip. December 6.

H E Love. Served in LCFs 11, 24 and LCG 939. Cobram, Australia. January.

P F Restorick. Served LSI(H) Royal Ulsterman. Southampton. March 26.

P Dugan. Served LCI(L)379 and LCT 7123. Burnham. April 17.

Reunions

SEPTEMBER 2011

HMS Indomitable Association: Reunion and AGM will be held at the Stretton Hotel, Blackpool from September 2 to 4. For more information contact Douglas Banks at illie@talktalk.net or tel: 0161 368 6945.

HMS Wildgoose Association: 25th Reunion will be held from September 2 to 4 at Warners, Hayling Island. All enquiries to Ken Hayes on 01823 442973.

HMS Ocean Association: 24th Annual Reunion takes place at the Britannia Hotel, Coventry from September 23 to 25. Contact the Chairman, W Entwistle on 01282 433910.

HMS Protector Association is holding a mini social reunion at the Afton Hotel, Eastbourne from September 23 to 26. Further details and booking forms available from Doug Harris at dougatpindrift@aol.com or via the website at <http://www.hmsprotector.org/> or tel: 01495 718870. This event has proved to be a great success in the past and one not to be missed.

14th Carrier Air Group Reunion Association: The 17th reunion for anyone who served with 804 and 812 NAS, 1946-52, HM ships Ocean, Glory and Theseus, or at any other time, will be held on September 24 at the RNA Club, Royal Leamington Spa. We will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the ending of our first tour of operations in Korean Waters. Wives, partners and family members welcome. Further details from Ken Lambert at Lambert5nr@btinternet.com or tel: 01733 234655.

Battleship HMS Vanguard: Reunion from September 30 to October 2 at the Plymouth Astor Hotel (01752 225511), just £47 pppn for DBB. All ex ship's company are asked to make this a special effort. Contact D Scrivener on 01253 873807 for more information.

OCTOBER 2011

HMS Cardigan Bay Association: Reunion from October 7 to 10 near Liverpool. Contact Tony Palmer at 1acp1@tiscali.co.uk or tel: 01889 575172.

HMS Glory Reunion takes place at the Chesterfield Hotel, Chesterfield from October 14 to 17. This will be our 25th anniversary of reunions founded in 1986. All old Glory shipmates are welcome. Details from Tom Stallard at margaretstallard@yahoo.co.uk or tel 01303 256457.

HMS Illustrious Association: The AGM and Annual Reunion will take place from October 21 to 24 at Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford. Further details from the Secretary, Diane Coleman at dianecoleman@talktalk.net or tel: 01424 720745.

HMS Cheviot: Reunion will take place at the Inglewood Hotel, Torquay, Devon on October 29. Contact Vic Denham at vic742008@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 07949 955003 for more details.

NOVEMBER 2011

HMS Blake Marine Engineering Department: Annual reunion, November 4 to 6 in London. This reunion is open to all ex-serving members of Blake ME department particularly those who served during the 1970s. Visit <http://www.blakestokers.com>

and use the contact email address of info@blakestokers.com for details of accommodation or write to 3 Selwyn Avenue, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE25 9DH.

APRIL 2012

HMS Loch Fada Association: Reunion and AGM at Daunceys Hotel, Weston Super Mare from April 13 to 16. All ex-F390s welcome and any who can't make the 'Lockie' 2012 reunion. Details and booking forms from Frenchy at frenchy.delahaye@ntlworld.com or the F390 website or tel: 01252 310767.

HMS Protector Association 2012 Grand Annual Reunion and AGM is to be held at the Suncliff Hotel, Bournemouth on the weekend of April 20 to 23. Early booking is highly recommended. Forms and further

details available from Doug Harris at dougatpindrift@aol.com or downloadable from the website at <http://www.hmsprotector.org/> or tel: 01495 718870.

SEPTEMBER 2012

HMS Invincible Communications Association (Falklands) 82: It being the 30th Anniversary of the Falklands the Communications Association which meets every year would like to invite any crew members or air crew who served on board HMS Invincible during the Falklands to a reunion. Annual Reunion to be held in Barrow-in-Furness from September 21 to 23. For details contact Tim Jenkins at g0nz0bign0se@aol.com or tel: 07753 766875 or see the website at <http://www.hmsinvincible82.co.uk>.

Ask Jack

HMS Ganges: Seeking information regarding an old shipmate, Philip Allgood, ex HMS Ganges (1957). He was best man when I got married and it would be nice to have him at our 50th anniversary in December. Contact Brian Willis at brian.willis@ssesurf.co.uk or tel: 01580 291735.


Wilson, AB Francis John Muirhead: Seeking shipmates of my late Uncle Frank who was born in July 1937 and was 18 when he did his National Service. He was posted to Victoria Barracks, Portsmouth, in April 1956 and on completion of his National Service joined the RNR from 1958 to 1965. Some of the ships he served in are Victory, Cochrane, Teaser and Sea Eagle. Some of

the places he visited are Manila, Philippines, Hong Kong and Burma. Contact David Stewart at davidstewart1908@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 0131 477 6387.


Ship name: I have recently seen a model of a WW2 Destroyer with the prefix 'E' in its pennant number 'E09'. As an ex-naval person, the prefix 'E' in a pennant number is new to me and my ex-naval friends share my surprise. The model is of a destroyer with a single funnel, twin turrets on A, B & X platforms and eight torpedo tubes. Any clarification which can be provided would be appreciated. Contact Peter Purkiss, 57 Longford Crescent, Bradway, Sheffield S17 4LJ.

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

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Trophy lives

IN EARLY 1982 a long-standing difference of opinion between Great Britain and Argentina over the ownership of the Falkland Islands and other South Atlantic territories resulted in Argentine forces landing on South Georgia and, on April 2, the Falkland Islands.

This was condemned by the United Nations and signalled the start of Operation Corporate, the British military operation to recapture the invaded islands.

The next day Rear Admiral Woodward – the Task Force Commander – sailed south from Gibraltar with five destroyers, three frigates and two RFAs.

Within a week the carriers Hermes and Invincible and assault ships Intrepid and Fearless had left Portsmouth, the latter two ships carrying Commodore Amphibious Warfare, Cdre Clapp and Brigadier Thompson's 3 Commando Brigade, 40, 42 and 45 Commandos and 3rd Battalion, the Parachute Regiment – the 2nd Battalion of which was to join later.

By April 12 the number of ships heading south was deemed to be sufficient to declare and maintain a 200 mile Total Exclusion Zone around the Falklands.

Three days later Admiral

Woodward shifted his flag to Hermes which then became the Task Force Flagship.

South Georgia was recaptured on April 26 and six days later the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was torpedoed and sunk by the submarine Conqueror.

On May 4 Argentine Super Etandard aircraft attacked the Task Force with Exocet missiles, one hitting the destroyer Sheffield and leading to her eventual loss.

While HMS Alacrity's night transit of Falkland Sound on May 11 confirmed that mines had not been laid, later air attacks by the enemy were to lead – directly or indirectly – to the sinkings of the frigates Ardent and Antelope, the destroyer Coventry, the requisitioned merchant vessel Atlantic Conveyor and the landing ship RFA Sir Galahad; several ships also sustained varying degrees of damage from air raids.

In spite of these losses maritime superiority had been established and allowed the successful landing of Royal Marine and Army units.

Control of the land forces lay with Major General Moore RM in HMS Fearless and by the end of May Darwin and Goose Green had been recaptured.

As Mount Harriet, Two

Sisters and Mount Longdon had been taken by 42 Commando, 45 Commando and 3 Para on June 12 the final assault on enemy forces was clearly imminent.

With Port Stanley taken by 3 Commando and 5 Infantry Brigades, 2 Para having seized Windy Hill, the Scots Guards taking Tumbledown Hill and Mount William falling to the Gurkhas Major General Moore was able to accept the surrender of Argentine Forces on June 14.

The campaign cost 255 British lives; it involved over a 100 warships and requisitioned merchantmen and 13 Fleet Air Arm squadrons, and the *Naval Review* reported that it was characterised by "a mixture of well-practised procedures and hectic improvisation that were, in the light of history, nothing new to the Royal Navy."

To mark the anniversary of this successful operation, this month's selected Trophy – **No 7,298** – is a silver-plated statue of Hermes, the great messenger of the gods in Greek mythology.

It was presented to the aircraft carrier Hermes shortly after her entry into service in 1959, some 23 years before she played the leading role in a war over 8,000 miles distant from the United Kingdom.

Diary dates

JUNE
June 4, Saturday: **Collingwood Open Day**, www.royal-navy.mod.uk/cwd/openday/index.htm
June 18-19, Saturday and Sunday: **Sultan Show**, www.sultan.org.uk
June 25, Saturday: **Armed Forces Day**, www.armedforcesday.org.uk: Events around the country, and main event in Edinburgh

JULY
July 1-2, Friday and Saturday: **South Coast Proms**, www.southcoastproms.com
July 9, Saturday: **Yeovilton Air Day**, <http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/operations-and-support/establishments/naval-bases-and-air-stations/rnas-yeovilton/rnas-yeovilton-air-day-2009/>
July 20, Wednesday: **Culdrose Air Day**

Assignments

Cdre Christopher J Hockley to be promoted Rear Admiral and to be Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland and Flag Officer Reserve Forces from September 9.

Brig David A Hook to be promoted Major General and to be Director Force Reintegration HQ ISAF Afghanistan from October 26.

Cdre Clive C C Johnstone to be promoted Rear Admiral and to be Flag Officer Sea Training from July 12.

Sports lottery

April 16: £5,000 – AB1 G A Harmer; £1,500 – Mne B J West; £500 – AB1 T V Frederick.
April 23: VW Polo – PO F A Linn; £1,500 – Lt J K Griggs; £500 – AB1 P S Acres.
April 30: £5,000 – AB1 J S Orme; £1,500 – PO L M Skinner; £500 – AB1 M J Lycett.
May 7: £5,000 – LMA R Jefferies; £1,500 – Cpl G S McCrae; £500 – AB1 J S Regnard.
May 14: £5,000 – PO P E Garland; £1,500 – Mne R P J Maltby; £500 – CPO R J Schofield.

Entries for the Deaths column and Swap Drafts in July's Noticeboard must be received by **June 13**



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Many of these courses include recognition from industry organisations and academic institutions such as Middlesex University, London Metropolitan University, the University of St Andrews, the World Maritime University and North West Kent College.

Currently open for public enrolment, IBC Global Academy's International Diploma for Harbour Masters, which is endorsed by the International Harbour Masters' Association, is the only available course providing the theoretical knowledge required by harbour masters and port captains around the world.

The course is equally of relevance to deputies and assistants who help manage the marine function in a port or harbour, or indeed anyone interested in preparing themselves for entering the marine safety profession.

The course has proved a popular route for Royal Navy personnel looking to move into the military, commercial or recreational port sector.

The course is also recognised by the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) as a professional foundation and development distance learning course for harbour masters and their personnel, it qualifies for CPD for the UK Harbour Masters' Association

and is also endorsed by the International Association of Ports and Harbours.

Other port-related courses offered include the Diploma in Port Management, delivered in partnership with the School of Maritime Operations and Logistics at North West Kent College, and the Diploma in Terminal Management.

The port management course is ideal for professionals seeking to develop their knowledge and capability in delivering the landlord functions of modern port and harbour authorities, whilst the terminal management course addresses the delivery of cargo and passenger handling by terminals within the port estate.

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Open University can widen career horizons

MORE than 4,000 service personnel and their dependents are currently taking advantage of the special relationship between the Open University and the Armed Forces, picking from around 600 Open University and Open University Business School courses and making the most of the cost, flexibility and quality benefits on offer.

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Encouraged by the Ministry of Defence's Enhanced Learning Credits scheme (www.enhancedlearningcredits.com), an initiative to promote lifelong learning amongst members of the Armed Forces, students can get financial support towards the costs of personal or career development, after accruing a sufficient amount of service, from approved suppliers such as the Open University.

The flexible and distance learning format of Open University study means it is ideal for those in the Armed Forces, as they are able to work their studies around their shifts and postings.

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courses available and suitable for Service personnel enabling preparation for resettlement and the ensuing competition for jobs," says Paul Drake, Business Development Manager at the Open University.

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professional life.

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The Open University is the largest university in the UK with

more than a quarter of a million students, more than 7,000 tutors, in excess of 3,500 support and administrative staff and more than 1,200 full-time academic staff.

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across the world have studied with the Open University.

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The average age of a new undergraduate Open University student is 32, but the age ranges from 17-year-olds studying Open University courses alongside A-levels to students in their 90s.

It is also the largest provider of higher education for people with disabilities.

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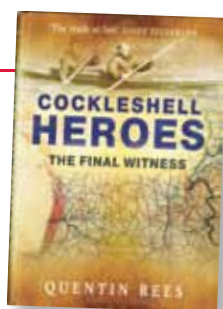
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Last word on canoe raid

THERE are few more potent stories of courage and sacrifice than that of the Cockleshell Heroes.

The WW2 raid on Axis shipping by a handful of commando canoeists has captured the imagination through many accounts – including a major feature film – and has an undying place in the annals of the Royal Marines.

Now, a new and exhaustive history has raised questions over the true reasons for the raid on shipping in enemy-occupied Bordeaux in 1942, as well as the extent of the success of the operation – codenamed Frankton.

In **Cockleshell Heroes: The Final Witness** (Amberley, £20 ISBN 978-18486-88612), Quentin Rees presents us with an encyclopaedic account of Frankton in which the valour of the ten men who undertook the raid – and the three left behind – shines through almost every page.

While Rees refers to Churchill's view that the raid shortened the war by six months, he examines not only whether it achieved its purpose, but the reasons for the enterprise in the first place.

The commandos, who in a freezing December paddled their Cocker Mk 2 canoes 105 miles up the Gironde Estuary under the noses of the Germans, attached limpet mines to several blockade-running merchant vessels berthed in Bordeaux, seriously damaging four of them.

The author shows us that even in the planning phase, it was appreciated that the group's chances of getting back were very slim. Those fears were largely borne out. Apart from two commandos whose canoe failed to launch from HMS Tuna, and one reserve member of the team, only the raid's leader – the legendary Maj Blondie Hasler – and Cpl Bill Sparks made it home. Of the others, two were lost at sea and six were captured by the Germans and executed under Hitler's notorious order to execute commandos captured in such raids.

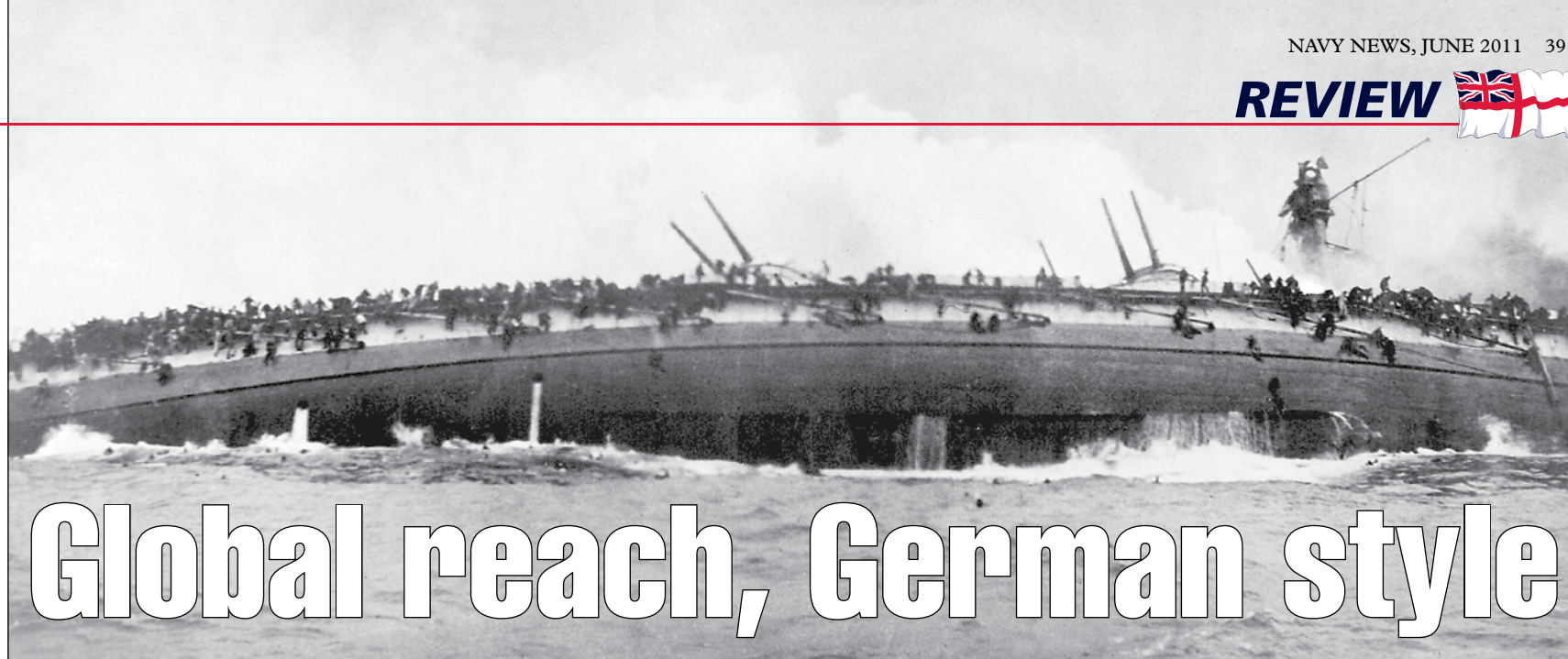
As well as complementing his account with sections on the development and use of the Cocker Mk2, the background to the raid, Tuna and the brave French folk who helped the heroes, Rees presents illustrated biographies of all 13 commandos.

The author does not shy away from asking whether Frankton was worth it. He makes the point that the four merchantmen damaged were all repaired relatively quickly – and were empty at the time of the attack.

So was there at the time an unstated reason for the raid? Rees refers to a post-war comment by Lord Mountbatten who is reported to have said that the raid was specifically planned to destroy German ships about to sail for Japan with radar equipment – a detail that could have accounted for Churchill's assessment that Frankton shortened the war.

However, the author writes that intelligence information indicating the presence of new technologies on board the ships "does not and may well not have ever existed. It is likely that, if the developing technologies were the target, the Frankton raid was speculative in this regard and that, with all or most of the five teams placing each of their eight limpets apiece on shipping, the odds of getting these 'important' technologies would be high."

Rees acknowledges that conflicting opinions about the impact Frankton had on the war effort prevail. "The loss of life for the sake solely of morale boosting seems offensive," he says; "regardless there is absolutely no doubting the bravery, courage and endeavor of all the participants."



Global reach, German style

TO THE British public – and many sailors – the Great War at sea was a terrible disappointment.

The much-touted showdown between the British and German Fleets turned into a phoney war (a generation before the phrase was coined for a different stand-off), punctuated only by rare flashes of excitement.

But while the dreadnoughts of the Grand and High Seas Fleets only met once (at Jutland, or Skagerrak to the Germans), smaller naval forces – cruisers especially – saw frequent action.

The story of the German cruiser war is told in the excellent **Battle on the Seven Seas** by Gary Staff (Pen and Sword, £19.99 ISBN 978-184-884-1826).

The title is apt, for the Kaiser's Kreuzer were in action in the Pacific, Baltic, South Atlantic, Indian Ocean as well as the more restricted waters of the North Sea.

The reason why the *Kreuzerkrieg* extended beyond German home waters was Berlin's string of colonies.

Germany had come late to the age of empires. Its far-flung possessions – chiefly in Africa, plus Tsingtao in China and a string of Pacific archipelagos – paled compared with the British Empire, but it still required naval protection.

Most famous of these forces was Graf Spee's East Asia Squadron which fled Tsingtao at the war's

outbreak and led the Royal Navy a merry dance around the Pacific.

It mauled an inferior RN force off Coronel in November 1914 before Sturdee's battle-cruisers hunted von Spee down off the Falklands six weeks later.

That is an oft-told story – but the author breathes fresh life into it courtesy of vibrant German sources.

The propaganda of the day always portrayed the Huns as an unemotional war machine; the accounts left by the German *Matrosen* (matelots) shows otherwise. Their accounts are as vivid as anything left by British sailors of the age.

Oberleutnant zur See (Sub Lt) Knoop, spotting officer on the Scharnhorst, watched HMS Good Hope, Rear Admiral Christopher Cradock's flagship, blow up after suffering perhaps 40 hits from the German guns at Coronel:

The column of flames appeared pale red in colour and was towards its edges paler still. Its base was coloured green like a rocket flash. The explosion carried a quantity of ship's parts skywards.

While victory at Coronel led to widespread celebration in Germany (and dismay in Britain), there's little evidence of

triumphalism among von Spee's men.

The next day the admiral marshalled his ships for a brief sail past. The men lined the sides and cheered von Spee.

A month or so later, von Spee was dead and most of his squadron sunk as the Senior Service exacted terrible revenge off the Falklands.

Another month passed before the next cruiser clash when the Blücher was subjected to a fearful pounding at the Dogger Bank.

Her sinking provided us one of the most famous images of the Great War at sea (pictured above).

The final moments before the cruiser turned turtle were horrific:

Biting, poisonous smoke and also dirt and splinters flew through the vision slits and the hole in the tower hood [one gunnery officer wrote].

All that could be heard was the crash of exploding enemy shells and the whistle of splinters, together with the constant rush of blowing off steam and the crackle of flames. There was nothing to see but smoke, flames, steam and between that burning rubble.

As well as these famous clashes,

plus the hunting down of the Emden and Königsberg, and the cruiser actions at Jutland, Staff also features some lesser-known battles.

Indeed, his panoramic sweep through German cruiser operations ends in the Aegean in January 1918 and the Battle of Imbros.

The battle-cruiser Goeben and cruiser Breslau had arrived in Turkey in August 1914 – evading the RN's efforts to trap them.

The two vessels were 'transferred' to the Ottoman Navy and given Turkish names – but their crews were very much German. They spent the bulk of the war in the Black Sea dealing with the Russian Navy.

But at the beginning of 1918 they were ordered to break out of the Dardanelles and strike at Allied shipping in the eastern Aegean – thus relieving pressure on hard-pressed Ottoman forces in Palestine.

The battle began promisingly for the 'Turks': they sank two Royal Navy monitors off the island of Imbros.

All well and good. But then the battle began to turn sour as the 'Turks' strayed into a minefield. The Yavuz Sultan Selim (Goeben) was badly damaged but managed to limp back to the entrance to the Dardanelles, where she ran aground and was bombed repeatedly for more than a week before reaching safety.

Not so the Midilli (Breslau).

Not quite the full Matapan story

The Grove Review

battle itself only takes up half the 191-page book.

The overall approach is best described as laconic with 21 short chapters, some of which might have done with rather more thought as to their literary construction.

The overall lack of focus is demonstrated by the illustrations which start with pictures of the surrender of the Italian fleet in 1943, two of one of Malta's old coast defence guns, two of the battleship Roma completed long after Matapan and an old picture of the unrebuilt Italian battleship Caio Duilio that was not at the battle. The photograph of the sunken British heavy cruiser at Suda Bay is not Kent but York (and one wonders what it is doing in the book anyway – like the three pictures of the Italian human torpedoes which sank the two remaining British battleships at the end of the year).

Some of the illustrations are, however, very interesting, not least the painting on the front of Warspite about to pick up her Swordfish aircraft from the sea while under way during the chase of the Italian ships.

This significant achievement was, as the author correctly says, "a challenging operation that was faultlessly accomplished" and which has since received

insufficient recognition.

The description of the battle is as clear as it is brief and the background and results are intelligently summarised. I am not sure however if the author really justifies his sub-title, 'the Trafalgar of the Mediterranean'.

It is true, as Simmons makes clear, that the action did have significant effects on constraining the future operations of the Italian surface fleet. This inaction covered the later evacuation of Greece and the important Tiger convoy in May but Cunningham and his subordinates were rightly disappointed that the rest of the Italian force got away.

As the admiral wrote: "The results of the action cannot be viewed with complete satisfaction."

Matapan was not an annihilating victory and this was due to a number of weaknesses on the British side, which might have received fuller analysis in the book. The battle certainly did little to allow the Royal Navy operational freedom in the succeeding months and the Italian Fleet, despite its chronic and debilitating fuel shortages, did make further sorties, albeit to little effect.

The author has provided endnotes which is much to be praised, although they do make the point about the limited sources upon which he depends.

There are some errors that reflect this. The author quotes his main source on Italian policy, the still-useful book by Brigadin published in 1957, as mentioning



'Fliegerkorps IV' as the German air formation deployed to cover the Aegean to support the Crete operation. This must mean *Fliegerkorps* II, as IV was still in France.

The author writes quite clearly, although some simple mistakes like mis-spellings should have been edited out. In its overall lack of focus the book reads rather like an undergraduate thesis.

One major virtue, however, is that the analysis is very fair to the Italians, making clear their strengths and weaknesses.

It is a good introduction for someone who has little idea of the Mediterranean story. Its reasonable price also makes it attractive to those already interested and who want to revisit the subject.

It could however have been much more – and Matapan still could do with a truly major in-depth study.

All but 40 of the 370 souls aboard were lost after the ship struck a succession of mines.

Willi Nordeck, her senior gunnery officer, was among the last men to leave her. He was afforded a grandstand view of the cruiser's final moments.


The bow stood steeply up, the anchor cables rushed out, and seconds long the ship stood as good as still.

"Three cheers for our ship, people and Fatherland," called our commander across the water. And under the cheering "Hurrahs!" the ship slowly and majestically went in the depths. It was impressively unforgettable for those who saw it.

As the author points out in his introduction, this is not an academic tome.

But he has carried out extensive research and tapped many sources in the Bundesarchiv – the German counterpart to the National Archive/Imperial War Museum – to produce a book which should be on the shelf of anyone interested in World War 1 at sea.

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Units join forces for training

CADETS and staff from Tewkesbury unit joined Severn District colleagues at a training weekend at Cinderford.

Amongst the subjects covered were first aid (third class), seamanship (second class), chartwork (third class) and the Leading Cadet Board.

All five of the Tewkesbury cadets passed the first aid course, thereby earning points towards their next promotion.

For that they had to learn and demonstrate their understanding of a range of skills, including placing a 'casualty' into the recovery position, bandaging damaged heads, carrying out cardiopulmonary resuscitation or CPR under pressure against the clock and placing a damaged arm in a broad sling.

Days before the Cinderford weekend, colleagues from Stroud unit travelled to TS Otter to prepare for the Leading cadet Board.

They joined Tewkesbury's LC Ashley Macrow and a group of able cadets in practical leadership tasks to practise skills in leadership and communications.

Tewkesbury cadets now have the benefit of a new Trinity 500 pulling boat, which received a low-key welcome.

The boat was put into the water near CPO (SCC) Les Stamp's yard, then under the command of CI Austin Till, two oarsmen brought it along the River Avon (including a hard pull against the turbulent water going over a fast-flowing weir) and into Tewkesbury Marina, where it moved onto its berth beside the unit's Viking and two venerable ASCs (Admiralty Sailing Craft).

Viking is welcomed back

AFTER a complete refurbishment the Beccles unit's Viking powerboat has been relaunched, looking as good as new and providing a fine advertisement for the unit whose name it bears in its new coat of paint.

Stephen Warner, of Quayway boats, Beccles, has done a fantastic job of bringing the old Viking back to full working order.

The task took more than six weeks, with Stephen spending many an hour rubbing down, repairing and repainting.

The Viking will now rejoin the other powerboats, within the unit, teaching cadets the skills of powerboat handling on the Norfolk Broads.

Beccles Sea Cadets would like to say a big thank to Stephen for all his hard work, and also James Tubby for his support to the unit.

● *Beccles' newly-refurbished Viking powerboat is back at the unit*

Brighton by cycle

NINE cadets, four staff and one parent from Harrow and Wembley took part in the London to Brighton sponsored bike ride to raise money for their unit, with two of the cadets and one staff donning fancy dress.

It was a long day, with cyclists setting off from Clapham Common around 7am, averaging speeds of over 10mph (excluding rest stops) and temperatures as high as 27°C (see right).

The group reached Brighton shortly after 4.30pm, after which the cadets cooled off in the sea.

To prepare for the event, PC Tom Galvin from the Metropolitan Police visited the cadets to run through safe cycling and hand signals, which was very much appreciated.

The cadets also completed some practice rides; these were only 18 miles long, so it was a sterling effort by everyone to complete the 60 miles over the Sussex Downs to Brighton.

The final sum raised has not yet been calculated, but it will be at least £1,000.

The unit also provided seven cadets as a carpet guard for a function at the prestigious Merchant Taylors Hall, held by the Worshipful Company of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Cadets lined the entranceway as guests arrived, then the stairs leading down to the dining room where dinner – fish and chips – was served by the stewards.

Cadets from the unit perform this function at various events throughout the year in return for the support given by members of the Company to training.

Bridlington School cadets take flight

CADETS from Bridlington School CCF Contingent Navy Section jumped at the opportunity to take to the skies with the Navy.

The group of seven boys and three girls, accompanied by five members of staff, travelled from Yorkshire to take an air experience flight (AEF) at RNAS Yeovilton, and to tour the Fleet Air Arm Museum which shares the Yeovilton site.

Every cadet had the chance to take the controls of a Grob tutor, guided by the instructors of the AEF.

Two cadets had the chance to co-pilot Cdre Martin Westwood, Commodore Fleet Air Arm, who two years previously had visited Bridlington for the school's biannual inspection, with Lt Ollie Everett, an old boy of the school and now a Sea King pilot with the Commando Helicopter Force.

Not wishing to let a good opportunity slip through their fingers, Lt Ollie Everett arranged a ride in a Sea King for the party on the following day.

The cadets took part in a troop-carrying exercise for the Sea King, being collected and dropped off in the 'Arctic huddle', and each cadet and adult being winched into the helicopter.

By way of a thank-you the contingent commander of Bridlington School CCF, Wing Cdr Sue Shilladay RAF VR(T), surprised Lt Everett with a presentation of a miniature



● *Cadet Coxswain Andrew Robinson, of Bridlington School CCF, aloft in a Grob trainer*

Afghanistan Medal as he had recently returned from operations.

As the group said their goodbyes and thank-yous they realised that Bridlington Royal

Naval Association had managed to get three of its members airborne in a Sea King at the

same time – Lt Everett as pilot, Lt (CCF) Martin Barmby RNR and S/Lt (CCF) Mikki Jackson RNR as passengers.

Not too many RNA branches can say they have managed that...

Also spotted at Yeovilton was LAET Colleen Campbell, another

ex-cadet who was taught as a cadet by Lt Barmby with the ACF whilst he was still serving in the Royal Navy at Clyde Naval Base.

The Royal Navy would appear to be in safe hands with the amount of cadets provided by Bridlington School.

Ship parade

CADETS from leading unit Northampton and Wellingborough have paraded to commemorate the wartime sinking of HMS Laforey, Northampton's affiliated ship.

An L-class destroyer, Laforey was sunk by torpedoes from stricken submarine U-223 in the Mediterranean in March 1944, during an Allied depth-charge attack.

Only 65 survived from her ship's company of almost 250.



Minibus advertises Corps

TUNBRIDGE Wells unit have won the support of local company JPro Services of Tonbridge, providing sponsorship and signage for the cadets' minibus.

The new signage on the vehicle will help promote the Sea Cadet Corps locally in Kent and at events across the UK as the unit's cadets and Royal Marine Cadet contingent train and compete.

Colette Wallace, company secretary of JPro Services, handed over the newly-liveried bus to unit First Lieutenant Lt Cdr (SCC) Jon Vanns RNR.

Skiing then Sutherland

MEMBERS of Inverness unit welcomed spring with a month-long burst of activity.

The month started with a week's skiing at the Lecht and Cairngorm, from Newtonmore, attended by both cadets and staff from across the Northern Area.

The week was not just for experienced skiers, but was also an opportunity for beginners to get a taste for the activity.

While the skiers were trying to keep their feet, the remainder of the TS Briton contingent were in their best uniforms enjoying the Royal Marines Band concert at Eden Court Theatre, supporting the Seafarers UK charity.

The end of ski week was quickly followed by a visit to HMS Sutherland, which was berthed at Invergordon (pictured right).

All Inverness cadets attended and were given a tour of the frigate by members of the ship's company, with some taking the opportunity to dress up in the ship's firefighting kit.

The month ended with the unit management committee holding a buffet for supporters, raising £1,200 to fund events and training.



As well as a full and smart turn-out of cadets and junior cadets, around 100 guests attended the buffet and joined in activities with the cadets.

VIP for the evening was the Admiral of the Moray Firth, the unit's president, Provost Jimmy Gray, who was piped on board TS Briton and greeted by a general salute from the Guard of Honour.

New unit websites are ready

AT LONG last all Sea Cadet units have now received log-on details for the new template unit websites.

"This means that the Sea Cadets can now present a uniform look and feel to every potential cadet and volunteer in the country, and that they can be sure that they are on a bona fide Sea Cadet unit website," said Samantha Shore, Head of Communications and Media at MSSC headquarters in London.

"This is a great step forward and offers the public the reassurance that they need when deciding on whether to join one of the country's oldest and most prestigious maritime youth organisations.

"The sites are also a lot easier to locate and search for with a simplified url: www.sea-cadets.org/unit_name, replacing the term unit name with the relevant Sea Cadet unit.

"This should make life a lot easier in this superfast Google world of ours.

"Units can customise the site with information just about them and what they have been up to, and the new calendar and news page function means visitors can get a real feel for what their local unit is doing.

"And with the news page feeding the homepage, each unit can display to the world what they have achieved or are planning to do.

"The sites have only just launched, and at the moment each unit has a period of time to migrate the information they want to keep currently on their existing sites to the new ones.

"Any unit without a new website can secure one by contacting SCC HQ at webmaster@ms-sc.org"

Malta seals affiliation

MALTA GC unit has been formally affiliated with the Armed Forces of Malta.

And the Commander of the Forces, Brig Martin G Xuereb, has agreed to be listed in the unit's annals as an Honorary President.

The Brigadier, a member of the Royal College of Defence Studies, is a graduate in social sciences and politics, and holds a Masters degree in International Relations from Kings College London.

"We are without doubt honoured to have garnered, yet again, another prestigious affiliation, and we hope that this will further the aims of our unit and the Sea Cadet Corps in general for the greater good of our cadets," said a unit spokesman.

To conclude the evening, following the Sunset ceremony, Provost Gray presented the annual awards for 2010.

The Burma Star Best Cadet trophy was awarded to OC Shultz and Best Junior Cadet to JC Williams.

The MacLennan Trophy for the Most Improved Cadet was presented to OC Hall by Roz MacLennan.



Working round the chaos

IT has been business as usual at TS Carron over the past few weeks – which has been something of an achievement in itself.

Staff and cadets at the **Stonehaven** unit have been finalising advancement training and assessments amidst the chaos of urgent electrical work which is being carried out at the unit's headquarters.

That meant cadets had to run their weekly training programme externally, using a variety of venues, including their boatshed, the Mackie Academy games hall, the Green Pavilion and the Stonehaven Air Training Corps squadron HQ.

Five cadets attended the **Grampian District** Leading Cadet Advancement board which was held at Stonehaven – and they passed with flying colours.

The five – Ross Lawson, Jack Wood, Hannah Thomson, Liam Parker and Alex Blake – were assessed in a number of areas, including dress and bearing, parade and ceremonial, fire prevention and drills, unit duties, leadership and instructional methods.

Alex Blake passed the board with a credit.

And after meeting all criteria and gaining the necessary qualifications for advancement, Anna Elliot was promoted to Petty Officer.

Anna had to attend a week-long instructor qualifying course held at MOD Caledonia in Rosyth, gaining a valid first aid certificate and an Instructional Method grading in advance.

Finally, the unit's First Lieutenant, Sean Fraser, attended a National Officer Selection Board in Portsmouth, and he was also successful.

This means he has gained his commission, and is promoted to sub-lieutenant.

Back to the activities, and the cadets of Stonehaven launched their boats in April in preparation for the 2011 boating season, and after Easter attended their annual boatwork weekend which was held on the River Forth at the Port Edgar Boat Station.

During the summer the cadets will take part in pulling, dinghy sailing, powerboating, paddlesports and offshore sailing and powerboating. This will lead to a range of nationally-recognised qualifications and entry to a number of regattas across the UK.

Pair win Africa trip

TWO Naval cadets have won places on a three-week adventure to South Africa this summer through the Duke of Westminster Award scheme.

Organised by educational charity the CVQO (Caret Vocational Qualification Organisation), the competition saw 300 cadets nominated by various youth organisations competing in physical and mental challenges, demonstrating teamwork, leadership and communications skills.

Four Sea Cadets reached the latter stages – APO Tom Kennedy (Lincoln unit), POC Charlotte Robinson (Hereford), Cpl Nathan Robinson (Hornchurch and Upminster) and LC Hannah Smith (Bridgwater) – which meant a gruelling 36-hour assessment in the Quantock Hills in Somerset.

Of that quartet, Charlotte was chosen as one of the nine finalists, alongside Freya Lygo, an NCO in the Naval Section of the **Oundle School CCF**.

An awards ceremony will be held in London this month, when the Duke of Westminster Award winner and runners-up will be announced.

Following the ceremony and lunch on the capital the nine finalists will leave for their expedition to South Africa.



● Pico dinghies from the Port Edgar boat station sail in close formation on the River Forth

Picture: CPO(SCC) Ian Nelson

Sunny start to the sailing season

CADETS from **Queensferry** unit got their sailing season off to a great start when they participated in a sail training weekend organised by the Edinburgh District.

The event was based at Port Edgar Marina in South Queensferry – the location of TS Lochinvar, Queensferry's HQ, and Northern Area Sea Cadets' national boat station.

The event covered all levels of experience, with some 30 cadets receiving RYA Youth Sailing Scheme (YSS) qualifications ranging

from basic (Level 1) to advanced (Level 4).

The event was organised by District Officer Lt Cdr Graham Tait, along with Edinburgh District unit staff and the Port Edgar boat station.

Cadets from **Queensferry, Edinburgh Trinity, Edinburgh Leith and Musselburgh** units took part.

"It is fantastic to see individual units coming together as Edinburgh District," said Queensferry's Training Officer CPO (SCC) Ian Nelson.

"Many individual cadets will meet new friends for the first time, which is a key part of being a Sea Cadet."

"The qualifications gained over this weekend form the bases for future generations of sailors and it is great to see so many young men and women having such a fantastic and fun time."

"We were even fortunate to have bright sunshine and light winds throughout the weekend – a great event for Edinburgh District and a great start to the sailing season."

Salisbury move on...

A 25-YEAR dream and a five year project have come to fruition with the official opening of **Salisbury** unit's new headquarters.

The old unit building was constructed in 1969, largely from the remains of a pre-war school.

In recent times it had become tired and in much need of replacement – a sagging roof was putting strain on the old structure, requiring plenty of steel supports to keep it together.

The process of replacement required a number of initiatives.

Local people and park users – the building was in Churchill Gardens on the bank of the River Avon – had to be consulted, and a fundraising campaign started.

The unit had to raise around £670,000 since 2006, and only a year ago almost £100,000 was needed to kit out the top floor of the building, in Churchill Way and just upstream from the Wiltshire College.

That sum was cut to less than £40,000 through DIY efforts, which included staff and families putting in the ceilings and doing all the decorating and carpentry.

So it was with considerable pride that the cadets and staff of Salisbury planned a big parade and ceremony to mark the opening of the headquarters.

Commanding Officer Lt Cdr



● Salisbury unit parades through the streets of the city

(SCC) Clive Hackett RNR led the parade – which included the band of **Poole** unit, who had their own celebration shortly after (*see below*) – from Salisbury Cathedral.

Captain Sea Cadets Capt Mark Windsor took the salute at a march-past, then everyone gathered on the main deck to greet Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral

Charles Montgomery.

The admiral met cadets, staff, guests and local dignitaries, then watched a boatwork display in one of the unit's new Trinity 500 pulling boats – two of them, plus the boatshed, were paid for by a Lottery grant (and through the hard work of Jonathan Everett, the driving force behind the whole

headquarters fundraising and building project.

A dedication service was led by the unit's padre, Vice Admiral Montgomery unveiled a plaque, then a dedication cake was cut.

The new HQ features seven new lecture rooms, a ward room, uniform store, offices and a galley on the upper floor.

... and Poole has new premises as well



● From left: Capt Malcolm Shakeby, CPO (SCC) Stephen West, Angela Bulteel, Cllr Chris Bulteel and Jackie Maynard at the official opening ceremony at TS Drax

THEY have been waiting ten years, but the cadets of **Poole** unit finally had the chance to celebrate as building work finished on their newly-expanded headquarters.

The foundations for what is now the new boat shed at TS Drax were laid around a decade ago.

And over the subsequent years the project has yielded two new classrooms, an enlarged main deck and a new roof.

The official opening ceremony was carried out at the end of April by the Mayor of Poole, Cllr Chris Bulteel, who was accompanied by his wife Angela, the town's Mayoress.

Also attending were the Sheriff of Poole, Cllr Graham Wilson,

and the Sheriff's Escort (his wife Sally), the High Sheriff of Dorset Alan Frost, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of the county Peter Harvey and unit president Capt Malcolm Shakeby.

Trustees, sponsors, supporters, guests, cadets and staff were welcomed by unit chairman Jackie Maynard and Commanding Officer CPO (SCC) Stephen West.

Catering was provided by cook stewards from TS Drax, the unit's band and physical training display team put on performances throughout the evening, and a slide show of Poole cadets in action was also put together.

Concert will aid Bolton

A SPECIAL band concert has been organised in aid of **Bolton** unit early next month.

The event, at 7.30pm on July 2, will be staged at the Victoria Hall, which seats up to 1,200 people.

The concert is the brainchild of Jan Thomas, who was invited to join the unit's management committee last November and elected secretary.

Making fundraising a priority, Jan set about organising the concert.

"The band will be the famous Wingates Band and Valerie Taylor will be the supporting soprano," said Jan.

"I have arranged for the Victoria Hall to be decorated with bunting, and there will be various VIPs which will include the Mayor and Mayoress of Bolton, the Sea Cadet Corps' North West Area Officer Lt Col Davies RM, David Kaye, the President of the Wingates Band and possibly the Manager of Marks and Spencer Bolton branch."

Cardiff get new home

CARDIFF unit has completed its transfer from its previous headquarters in the city's docks to new premises within the Territorial Army Centre at Ty Llewellyn.

The move is the culmination of many months of hard work by Cdr Bob Reid and his team within the Reserve Forces and Cadet Association.

An official commissioning ceremony was attended by the Lord Lieutenant of South Glamorgan, Surg Cdr Peter Beck RNR – who unveiled a plaque commemorating the event – and by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff.

After the cutting of a commissioning cake, the VIP guests were given a tour of the new unit, which is housed in a self-contained section of one of the TA buildings.

TS Cardiff is joined at Ty Llewellyn by the local Army Cadet Force unit, which also relocated from its previous home.

The cadet groups parade on different evenings, and each has its own distinct customs, traditions and procedures, but the two units are keen to work together to make the most of their new surroundings.

Baxi bonus

GUISBOROUGH unit received a £1,000 sponsorship cheque from Baxi Commercial Division, enabling the entire 19-strong unit to attend a one-week course at HMS Raleigh during the summer.

Officer-in-Charge CPO (SCC) Rob Fielden said the cadets had been working hard to raise money for the course, but the Baxi donation meant the unit had hit its target and could look forward to damage control and firefighting exercises as well as a visit to a ship.



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Age over numbers

PHASE 2 air engineering technician trainees from RNAS Culdrose met for the first time on a football pitch with the aim of settling bragging rights between the Sea King and Merlin communities.

Merlin personnel outnumber the Sea Kings – known as the ‘Historic Flight’ by non-Sea King personnel at the Helston air station – by about two to one so they had a larger pool of talent from which to draw a team.

There were some memorable performances by both sets of players including the Navy U19 star Danny Brookwell, who opened the scoring with a darting run through the middle and slotted to make it 1-0 after just 35 seconds.

Sea King captain Paul Saberton and his sidekick Craig Sutton showed great leadership and the willpower to succeed as they took this game seriously from the start and ensured their team mates followed suit, cruising to an 8-2 victory.

Despite the trouncing, the Merlin boys never gave up.

There were particularly strong performances from the Merlin skipper Paul McNamara and central defender David ‘Swampy’ Marsh who won almost every ball in the air.

26 miles at 51° South

SAILORS from HMS Clyde joined runners from around the globe at the world’s most southerly endurance race – the Port Stanley marathon.

Local residents lined the streets to lend their support while children manned various water-stations on the road to keep the runners going.

Regarded as the most southerly marathon, the course included a loop of Stanley before heading east to the airport, west to Sapper Hill, returning to the airport before finishing with a final loop of the Falklands’ capital.

Fresh from completing Operational Sea Training, the Falklands guardship was able to field a relay team of ET(ME) ‘Lara’ Croft, AB (SEA) Ritchie Fielding, AB (CIS) ‘Timmy’ Mallett and S/Lt Edmund Read. XO Lt Midge Colvin and young officer S/Lt David Farrow were keen to run the full 26+ miles, sticking together to keep up morale with the patrol ship’s CO, Lt Cdr Carl Wiseman, poised to administer pain killers and sweets on the way from the comfort of a Land Rover.

Being the Falklands, the wind was always going to be a deciding factor, and although gusts stayed under 20 knots the head wind returning from the airport to Sapper Hill was set to be a certain psychological barrier, especially at the 18/19-mile mark.

Needless to say, all six runners persevered and finished well, cheered by the spectators at the finish and around the town hall.

With the relay team finishing in a strong fifth place, it was down to the XO and the SFTYO to keep up the results.

Lt Colvin crossed the line after a ‘second wind’ at the 18-mile mark to finish ninth out of 48 with a time of 3h 45m 18s with S/Lt Farrow plodding over the line 15 seconds shy of four hours to finish 18th.

Both have decided to adopt a more conventional training programme next time as opposed to a two-week OST package and diet of action messing.

Also participating in the marathon was Alan Rowe, founder of The Baton charity, established to highlight and support the work of British forces personnel across the world.

Smiling and giving words of advice throughout the race, Alan carried the baton with him, crossing the finish line, just under five hours, cheered by Cdre Tim Lowe Commander Maritime Warfare School and the team from Clyde.

A* tennis from the Bs

NAVY tennis players again reigned supreme at the Inter-Services B championships, this year hosted by RAF Halton.

The Navy retained the trophy they lifted in 2010 while the ladies shared top spot with the Air Force.

The men’s squad has been enjoying a particularly good run of form over the past couple of years, having also retained the A trophy last August.

This most recent win at Halton is the fourth in a row for the men in tournaments.

Much of this is the result of early preparations; since last September potential team members have gathered at Portsmouth Indoor Tennis Centre every month for squad training and a formative squad began to emerge.

Keeping the hunger and drive to retain the trophy very much at the forefront, the squad undertook an intensive four-day warm-weather training tour of Cyprus in March.

This honed match fitness and strengthened team spirit – both key factors at Halton.

A strong coaching team consisting of CPOPT Steve Losh, Kevin Baker (a Level 5 high performance coach who runs Portsmouth Tennis Academy) and Cdr Nigel Bowen (the RN men’s squad captain/manager) took time to formulate optimum selections for the singles players and doubles combinations. Whether selected or not, each squad member put in maximum effort for preparation and team support over the tournament weekend.

Traditionally a hard-court tournament, the acrylic courts at Halton had been confirmed as unfit for play and so the event was moved to artificial clay courts in the adjacent indoor dome.

Despite having practised throughout on hard courts, the RN team adapted quickly to the slower surface and began to assimilate the art of sliding into their shots.

The first (singles) day began well with the RN’s No.2 newcomer Lt Chris Sharrott seeing off his Army opponent 6-1, 6-2 – a fine way to start his Inter-Services



tennis career.

Next on court was the Navy’s No.1, S/Lt Simon Mayell, who has had several year’s experience of Inter-Services tennis. He overwhelmed his RAF opponent 6-2 6-0 with an accomplished performance.

He won his second match against the Army 7-6, 6-3 in a similar fashion. Although Sharrott was unable to defeat his RAF opponent at the end of the day, the RN men were in the lead going into the second day.

Day two (doubles) couldn’t have started better: the strong No.2 pairing of S/Lt Martin Shortt and PO Robert Lafferty were four match points down in the second set but came back to win against the Army 2-6 7-6 6-2.

That result meant the RN No.1 pair (Sharrott/Mayell) only needed to beat their RAF counterpart to secure a tournament win. Instead,

they lost 6-7, 4-6.

With three matches remaining, the RAF could still win the tournament if the Navy lost their two remaining rubbers and they won both of theirs. Moreover, the overall result would tie at 4-4 if the Army won both of their remaining matches and the RAF won one.

Next on to court were Rob/Martin. With the confidence of defending four match points under their belt, they coolly beat the RAF 6-3 6-2 to secure the tournament win for the Senior Service.

This made the final match a ‘dead rubber’. Sharrott suffered a fairly severe shoulder injury by this stage so was substituted by ET Mark Allen, playing on his final day in the Service.

Having boldly won their first set, they finally succumbed 6-3 5-7, 1-6 but the work had been already

done by all and it was a Navy win – again – with five rubbers to the Navy, four to the RAF and three to the Army.

As for the ladies’ contest, Musn Alice Hudson (*pictured striking a winning forehand*), Surg Cdr Fleur Marshall, Cdr Diane Stewart USN and Surg Lt Cdr (D) Lindsay Falla came out on top after some well-fought matches.

Ladies’ tennis is not blessed with an extensive squad, but regular training through the winter under coach Andy Ranson paid off this year.

Musn Hudson, playing in her second Bs, overcame her nerves comfortably winning both her singles on the first day.

Surg Cdr Marshall put in a sterling effort but suffered severe cramp. Nevertheless at the end of day one the team were ahead with three out of four points.

With a slight change to the original plan, Cdr Stewart (playing in her last Bs before returning to the US) played with Surg Lt Cdr Falla (playing in her first Bs).

Despite some well-fought games the pair were beaten by the Army and RAF.

Musn Hudson and Surg Cdr Marshall played some inspired tennis winning both their matches in straight sets.

The last match of the competition saw the Army and RAF No.2s meet.

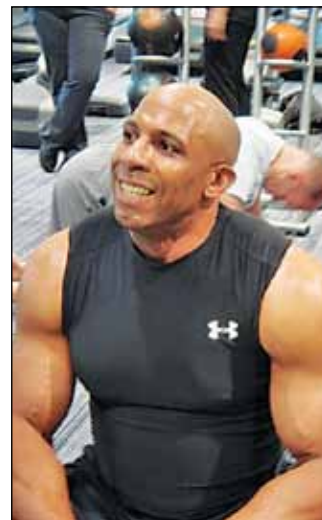
An RAF victory meant that they equalled the five matches won by the RN. Countback on sets was also ten-a-piece so the RAF and Navy were declared joint winners.

The last time the RN’s name was on the trophy was in 1998, so this victory was long overdue.

The team is now looking to retain the Inter-Service A trophy for a double-winning season.

The squad is desperate to expand. Training takes place on Mondays at 7pm in Portsmouth’s tennis dome.

There are also regular training sessions throughout the season and a small number of fixtures at high-profile clubs in London. Contact Surg Cdr Marshall on 93932 5573/02392 625573 or fleur.marshall684@mod.uk.



Hard Leiba pays off for rower Collin

CPO Collin Leiba (HMS Talent) set two British records competing at the annual Farnborough Indoor Rowing competition.

The submariner (*pictured above, in case you were wondering*) made his mark in the 500 and 1,000-metre races in the men’s heavyweight 40-49 age group, writes WO1 Paul Winton.

Having come close to beating the 1,000m record just a few weeks earlier, the Farnborough organisers had set up a special record race attempt as the opening event of the meeting.

Maintaining an even pace over the distance – and spurred on by an expectant crowd – the senior rate withstood the growing oxygen debt and lactic acid related muscle pain, powering to a time of 2m 58.2s to beat the previous record by three tenths of a second.

Four hours later Collin was back on the rowing machine for the 500m race, this time confronted with rival competitors of a similar calibre.

Once again, the man of Talent managed to maintain an even pace over the whole race distance to set a time of 1m 19.6s, with unplanned consistency to repeat his 0.3s improved time over the previous record.

The old record may well have been broken earlier this year at the English Championships had the machine not broken under the strain.

Both of Collin’s performances set world-leading times in the category for the 2011-12 season.

CPO Leiba’s ability to achieve these performances owes much to his long term dedication to a strength and fitness regime.

Over the past 18 months, through an indoor rowing training regime, he has managed to develop greater aerobic fitness and performance without significant loss of strength and power, thus improving his ability above ‘sprint’ distances beyond 1000m.

Underlining his achievement is the fact that seven months of that time was spent on an operational deployment in the T-boat whilst training in cramped conditions with temperatures exceeding 40°C.

Regularly representing the Royal Navy at high-profile indoor rowing competitions, the chief petty officer finished 17th at the World Indoor Rowing Championships in February over the classic 2,000m race distance in a time of 6m 38s.

Accepting that he is much better suited to shorter race distances, he is committed to further develop aerobic capacity, fully aware that his 500m/1000m times predict 2,000m times close to 6m 10s and the chances of medals at the national and world championships.

Hoofing time in Egypt

YOU’LL be amazed by how many Navy News readers get in touch, asking us to feature more images of RN kitesurfers and camels in the paper...

Well now we’re able to oblige: one dromedary, six kitesurfers (they’re the ones in the background...), wonderful blue skies and silvery waters.

Following the success of the first Royal Navy Royal Marines Kitesurfing Association training camp to Fuerteventura a couple of years ago, snatching the Inter-Services title from the RAF in 2010 and victory in the inaugural Inter-Services cross-Channel race, the association wanted to maintain the growing momentum with another winter training camp.

This time the kitesurfers headed to the Egyptian resort of Sharm El Sheikh and the lagoon of Nabq Bay with a week’s training

for 16 riders, helped by the RN Sports Lottery, writes Lt Kat Rawlinson.

The surfers found perfect conditions – flat, waist deep water, wind every day, and an excellent safety set-up run by a local (British-owned) company.

The wind rose up early every day, making the 7am starts a little challenging as the sun had yet to warm the water, but everyone was on the sea as soon as conditions allowed for their level.

Individual development targets were set at the start, and with encouragement and in-house instructor support, all 16 RN kitesurfers surpassed them.

Those fresh from their Level 2 British Kitesurfing Association courses were up and running, holding ground and starting transition turns by the end of the week, while the more advanced concentrated on

kite-loops and unhooked moves.

The result – a few bruised and aching bodies – more than matched by big grins and a real sense of achievement across the group. Bring on the competitions...

...which begin in Weymouth on June 1-3 with the RN championships, followed by the Inter-Services in Saunton, North Devon, from October 28-30.

This relatively new three-dimensional sport is open to all members of the Royal Navy.

The association is organising beginners’ courses during this year, as well as training days to advance your riding – check out www.kitenavy.com for details, or get in touch with Lt Cdr Bob Bowman (bob.bowman283@mod.uk) or 93781 7222, the RNRMKA membership secretary.



Army inflict double defeat

Continued from page 44

The Navy suffered their first sin bin of the game and this gave the Army enough of an advantage to place a defensive RN scrum under pressure, leading to a dynamic back row move to put the Army No.7 over out wide for a 19-6 lead.

With the game all but lost, the Mariners began to play with more confidence and freedom, drawing the Army offside and allowing Clark to close the points gap with another kick to 19-9.

However, the Army drove to the Mariners line and, following an off-the-ball incident, the Navy found themselves down to 13 players with another sin bin; the resultant penalty widened the gap to 22-9.

It proved to be the last score of the game and so passed another opportunity by a strong Mariners squad to beat the Army.

Surely the redoubtable chaps of HMS Portland can provide us with some rugby cheer from their visit to Dorset.

Er, no.

After their defeat two years ago at the hands of the sailors, Weymouth were determined to exact revenge at their Monmouth Avenue ground.

After kick off, both sides squandered opportunities to open the scoring before Weymouth started to dominate, forcing Portland to make mistakes.

Weymouth finally broke the deadlock of the first half with a try, crossed in from the wing.

After some changes were made by both sides at half time, Weymouth stepped up another gear and registered the most impressive try of the game.

Undeterred, the sailors battled on and tries were scored by ET(ME) Binns and AB(Sea) Lawson.

Unfortunately it was too little too late and Weymouth ended victors 19-10 to re-take the affiliation cup trophy.

Wallasey Rugby Club in Wirral is holding a day of sport and fun for Help for Heroes.

CPO Bernie Dath (Northwood) is organising events which kick-off at the club's Cross Lane ground at 11am.

The first match is mini tag rugby taking at 1pm, then fancy dress 7s at 2pm, a ladies-gents game at 3pm and finally a raffle and auction at 5pm.

Hopefully personnel from HMS Eaglet in Liverpool, plus local Sea Cadets will also be in attendance.

And, most importantly, there'll be a bar and barbecue all day.

More details at www.pitchero.com/clubs/wallasey

Ensure you have vision of Twenty20

ALL eyes will be on the home of cricket on June 28 with the Senior Service hoping to hold on to the Inter-Services Twenty20 title.

For the fourth year running, Lord's is hosting the fast-paced cricketing treat on June 28.

Having defeated the Royal Air Force off the final ball of their first match in 2010, the RN dispatched the Army with green beret Cpl Alvin Pollard stroking the winning runs with only two balls to spare.

As well as a day of top-notch leather upon willow, this year's championships will also be raising money for Help for Heroes and the Royal British Legion.

Organisers hope to fill 7,000 seats. Tickets – adults £14, OAPs £7, children £5, or groups of ten for £100 – are available from www.ist20.com and there's free entry for school groups through the Lord's School Parties Application Form.

Gates open at 9am. The first match starts at 10am, the second at 1.15pm and the third at 4.30pm.

Texans bar progress

MANAGER WO2 Marty Wallace and his assistant **WO1** Del King took charge of the youth team for their second year as the squad headed to Texas and the Dallas Cup, the oldest international youth soccer tournament in the USA.

Since its inception more than 30 years ago, a Royal Navy team has competed in all but one tournament.

The 2011 contest opened for the sailors against the Dallas Texan Reds in sultry (24°C) conditions. Straight from kick-off, the ball was played to the RN left-back, Musn Andy Bailey (RMSOM), who sent RNAS Culdrose's AET Danny Brookwell on a run down the left-hand side. Brookwell skipped past two challenges into the Texans' penalty area and slotted the ball across the face of the goal and into the far corner – 1-0 to the Navy and just 30 seconds on the clock.

Ten minutes later and a defensive misunderstanding let the Texans' lone striker through on goal to easily beat the Navy keeper for 1-1.

The RN restored their lead when excellent link-up play down the right-hand side between AB Andrew Smith (Ark Royal) and ET(WE) Andy Keenan (Collingwood) opened up the Texan defence.

Keenan received the ball on the edge of Texan area directly in front of goal and with his left foot skilfully drilled the ball into the bottom right-hand corner.

Within minutes, the Texans were level before taking a 3-2 lead into the half-time break thanks to a close-range strike.

The sailors were undeterred and after a spirited half-time talk from WO2 Wallace, the RN opened the second period playing some good, slick football.

Sadly they couldn't break down the Texan defence and the Reds sealed a 4-2 win after a rash challenge from the RN goalkeeper, ET(ME) Ryan Biggar (Northumberland) led to a spot kick, clinically dispatched by the locals.

The second of the Senior Service's group matches was against Santa Clara Sporting from northern California.

This was a must-win match for the Brits if they were to stand any chance of getting through to the quarter finals. Once again temperatures were unfavourable (28°C at 10am).

The first 20 minutes were dominated by the RN, who spurned plenty of chances to open the scoring until the Americans struck against the run of play. A deflected shot inside the Navy's area fell kindly to an unmarked Santa Clara player to tap in at the far post – the sailors looked for an offside flag, but none was raised.

Within minutes, the Navy were on the attack again and won a corner kick from the left-hand side of the Santa Clara goal. ET(WE) Keenan took the set-piece corner, inswinging – and scored directly from the kick.

Ten minutes into the second period and the RN were 2-1 up. A free-kick deep inside the Santa Clara half was neatly delivered into the penalty area – the keeper came but missed, and during the



● ET(WE) Lewis Early holds off a Texan Reds challenge during the RN U19's opening clash of the 2011 Dallas Cup

Onside with Lt Cdr Neil Horwood, RNFA

scramble to clear the ball, Lewis Early (HMS Nelson) slotted the ball home.

With only ten minutes left, the Californians scored the equaliser, however, and the 2-2 final scoreline meant the RN could not accrue enough points to qualify for the quarter finals.

The third and final group match was against a team from Trinidad and Tobago, the Skeene Hyacent Football Institute – typically known as SKHY.

The sailors started very strongly, hitting the crossbar three times and the post once in the first half hour.

The break came after 37 minutes when Brookwell slotted the ball past the keeper from just inside SKHY's penalty area to take a 1-0 lead at the break.

Within two minutes of the restart, the sailors had doubled their lead. A neat attacking move down the left-hand side started with Bailey (RMSOM) at the left-back position, passed the ball to Brookwell whose superior speed and dribbling skills out-foxed SKHY's defenders and he scored an almost replica goal of his opener.

CH Dylan Wilde (Raleigh) came close with an extravagant bicycle kick before an excellent free-kick from Keenan, the dead ball specialist; he swerved the ball low around the wall and into the right-hand corner of the SKHY goal.

SKHY were not giving up that easily – they were soon back in the game after the RN defence failed to deal with a long ball, which fell easily for the oncoming striker to finish at close range.

Intent on getting his hat trick, Brookwell had several more attempts on goal. He succeeded when a deflected shot from Early hit the post and he finished

effectively from inside the six-yard box.

SKHY had one more goal in them and after the Britons failed to close down quickly enough, a long range effort from 30 yards left Biggar no chance.

Although the qualifying rounds were over, the Navy still had one more match to play: a friendly against Soccer Elite, a Puerto Rican team from another group.

ET(WE) Steve Tilley (Collingwood) bagged the opener with a low shot to the right of the keeper from 15 yards. Brookwell again proved to be lethal, tearing the opposition apart down the left side, then crossing to the back post for ET Andy Thomson (Diamond) to finish at close range. Early scored the RN's third on 36 minutes; he was presented with a gift following more good work from Danny Brookwell.

Just when the Navy thought they were cruising to an easy first half victory, Soccer Elite took advantage of a poor clearance and scored at close range – 3-1 at half-time.

Early grabbed his second two minutes into the second period, again fed by Brookwell... who got his name on the scoresheet a couple of minutes later, striking directly from a corner. By the time the second half was ten minutes old, Brookwell had his hat-trick after a superb solo run.

With a comfortable 6-1 lead, the RN were now really enjoying the game, while Soccer Elite were struggling to keep up with the RN's slick passing and movement off the ball.

Makeshift right-back ET(ME) Josh Jones (Bulwark) grabbed the RN's seventh goal, Early added two more to his tally on 66 and 73 minutes (the latter a superb header from 12 yards out), before another consolation strike from

Soccer Elite when the RN defence failed to deal with a simple clearance.

The eight-goal cushion was restored when Musn Dave Hedley fired the ball into the net to bring the scoring at an end, 10-2 to the RN.

WO2 Wallace is now planning for next season and requires players to form the new squad. Anyone born on or after August 1 1992 is eligible for selection. Anyone interested in playing should contact WO2 Wallace (Sultan-SEGWO2PJT 93843 2652) or unit PT Staff.

Meanwhile in the slightly less exotic surroundings of Pompey... Fratton Park hosted its first Navy Cup Final since 1957.

The clash saw the first ship side to appear since HMY Britannia back in 1979 with Ark Royal making her first – and final – appearance.

HMS Seahawk were the clear favourites having won the title on nine of their 13 appearances in the final, while the Mighty Ark had held the Cup for the longest period of time (1939-1947).

In a close fought first half little was given by both sides and they went in 0-0 at half time.

The game came to life in the second half with ET(ME) Turley breaking the deadlock in the 55th minute following a goalmouth scramble for a 1-0 lead to the carrier.

Seahawk were galvanised into life and in the 67th minute AET Buckler equalised with a header from a free kick.

This was followed by a 72nd-minute penalty converted by LAET Collick following a scything tackle by AET Longstaff on CPO Parker.

While Ark chased the equaliser, they were caught out in the 80th minute by LAET Reed to make the score 3-1 to the Culdrose side.

PO Collins in the Seahawk goal continued to deny Ark and man of the match AET Buckler also frustrated the carrier boys' rhythm until the final whistle.

Veterans rock up for Cornish gig

HMS Raleigh's pilot gig rowing crew took top Naval honours in the annual international competition in the Isles of Scilly.

The seven-man crew (six rowers and a cox) rely heavily on support from the Submarine School plus VTF staff at Jupiter Point and worked very hard in testing conditions to finish 51st in this years' veterans' competition.

140 crews assembled on the island for the 2011 championships; the event is becoming a very popular form of highly-competitive racing.

Three of the crews in this year's line-up were flying the flag for the RN: Raleigh, Culdrose and BRNC.

Raleigh's crew, coxed by Cdr Nick Meredith (OC RN Submarine School) said it was "an outstanding performance from the rowers, who train hard in all weathers and mostly in their own time."

"We had to make last-minute changes to the crew this year and it has meant people rowing out of position. Given our commitment in our 'day jobs', it is always a challenge to select a consistently competitive crew."

For the civilian clubs competing this was their main hobby for which they train nearly every day and pay quite high prices to be club members.

Selection for the top crews is exceptionally difficult and the fitness levels displayed would challenge the most 'ninja' RN club swimmers.

The races are run in open water off St Mary's Quay over about 1.6 miles.

They are effectively straight line sprints which take around 20 minutes or so to complete – depending on the swell.

Anyone who has ever tried to row flat-out for 20 minutes on a Concept 2 machine will understand the pain involved.

All Raleigh's crew were veterans – average age 46 – and found it a significant challenge to compete with crews half their age.

WO2 Nick Robinson, part of the 'engine room' of the boat, said: "This sport is brilliant fun and really competitive."

"I took it up a couple of years ago after my body wouldn't allow me to play any more rugby and I wish I had tried it 20 years ago."

"The sporting ethos is the same; we train very hard and give everything we have to race and when it's all over and you have managed to catch your breath, sinking a pint and shaking hands with the opposition is a must."

Technical coaching, team selection and race strategy for the crew came from the stroke-oar and old-salt Dave King, an ex-CPO who now works at Jupiter Point as one of the senior VTF river instructors.

"Our performance this year was pretty good," said Dave.

"We are getting better all the time and it is a product of good old-fashioned team work and sheer grit and determination."

Lt Bungy Williams, who rows in the bow, is keen to add that it is not all about brute force and testosterone.

"The timing and technical aspect of the rowing is vital."

"If you look at some of the female crews competing, they make it look effortless. Their timing is bang-on and their technique is a joy to watch, their pace will put a lot of male crews to shame proving that you don't have to be a muscle-boson to excel in this sport."

WO2 Robinson adds: "In the RN we pride ourselves on great team work and the desire to succeed; this sport absolutely exploits those core values."

"There are six rowers in the boat and if you don't put a sixth of the effort in, your crew mates know."

"There is nowhere to hide in the boat and you absolutely have to earn your oar. I can recommend this sport to anyone"

League stars head to Leeds

RN Rugby League's annual State of Origin fixture celebrates its tenth anniversary this year.

At the invitation of Super League Leeds Rhinos, the match will take place at the world-famous Headingley Carnegie Stadium as a curtain-raiser to the West Yorkshire derby against the Rhinos' arch rivals Bradford Bulls.

The June 24 clash will showcase the quality of rugby league in the RN as well as helping to maintain the links between the city of Leeds and the Royal Navy.

In addition, the event will strengthen links between RNRL, the Rhinos and main sponsors Hesco Bastion as well as assisting the development of Rugby League in the South West.

Besides the action on the field a series of events will be staged by RN and RM personnel before and at the halftime intervals of the matches to entertain the spectators.

The Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity will also be present throughout to highlight the work they do for the welfare of all Naval Service personnel as well as raising money to enable them to continue their work.

The origin match kicks off at 5.45pm with the Rhinos-Bulls clash at 8pm.

Details of all the evening's events as well as special offer tickets for Senior Service personnel and their families (£5 for standing areas and £15 for seated tickets – savings of £15 and £12 respectively) can be found at www.therhinos.co.uk/buytickets

or call 0871 4231315 and quote the code LRNAVY01.

Before the men's outing, the RNRL Ladies – the Wrenegades – host Nottingham Outlaws on Saturday June 18 in Portsmouth as the women begin their preparations for September's Inter-Services series.

And RNRL was once again well represented at the recent RN Sports awards for the 2010 season. POPT Jim Barnes was nominated for the NATO Cup, awarded to the player of the year, while WO1 Keith Humpbleby was nominated as club official of the year.

Further details of all aspects of RNRL can be found at the website at www.pitchero.com/clubs/royalnavyrugbyleague

Next month



Size does matter – aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth



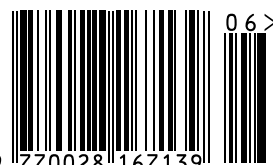
Here be Dragon – a day at sea with the new destroyer



In the thrall of the mountain kings – the work of HMS Gannet

Plus

King awesome? Inside the Fleet Air Arm's new observer trainer



GLOBAL REACH

'The stuff of dreams'

FIFTEEN matches over one and a half days culminated in Inter-Services hockey triumphs for the RN's senior men and U23 sides.

Some 350 players and officials were in action on two pitches at Burnaby Road in Portsmouth, watched by around 200 spectators, writes *Lt Cdr Alan Walker RNHA*.

For the seniors it was their first outdoor IS win since 2008, their fifth in the last eight years and only the 13th in the 102 years of the competition.

All five competitions were closer than ever, the senior men's event agonisingly so. Spice was added by former Army PTI QMSI Ian Jennings, star of 20-odd years of Army and Combined Services hockey (and England indoor and outdoor) coaching the RAF side.

The RAF's SAC Dowers opened the scoring from open play picking up a loose ball and rounding three not-yet-quite-in-the-groove Navy men. An attempt to play the ball with reverse stick left Micky Warriner stranded in goal for the Navy to go 1-0 down on five minutes.

Not to worry. LPT Rowan Edwards, playing better and better as he gets older, replied on 12 minutes from open play and then dark blue pressure, sustained for several minutes around the RAF goal, saw Lt Matt 'Woody' McNally RM get on the end of one in the melee for 2-1 to the Navy on 24 minutes.

Straight after half time Capt Ritchie 'Gucci' Moore RM buried the rebound at the Navy's fifth short corner to gain some breathing space with a 3-1 lead.

The RAF have their share of good quality players these days and it was Dowers again who got onto a rebound from the excellent Warriner to bury the RAF's second at the right hand post at the 40th minute, RN 3 RAF 2.

That scoreline remained for 15 minutes or so with both teams going close and the match tempo accelerating.

Lee Milton got five minutes in the sin bin for a tackle adjudged 'dodgy'. Fortunately for the RN, the resulting RAF short corner conversion attempt was unsuccessful.

Another of the RAF's scourges of the Navy, Ritchie Corbett, popped up to add to the RN's woes while still down to ten men to grab the equaliser: 3-3 with 14 minutes to go.

Just as he won the final match in the Indoor Inter-Services back in November S/Lt Richard Jenkin (BRNC) came to the Navy's rescue once again with an open-play goal; 4-3 to the RN with seven minutes left.

It was close, it was touch and go, pressure told on the RAF's long-serving Rob Machin; he went off for five minutes after an ill-judged tackle and played no further part in the match.

Big Mark 'Dixie' Dixon was magnificent in defence – a Trojan warrior of a man just when needed – Rowan Edwards was tackling like a demon, and Micky Warriner was flying in and out of his goal. The RAF's Wallis failed to capitalise on their best chance in the dying minutes and 16 Navy players breathed a sigh of relief as the final whistle went with the RN still 4-3 up.

Next morning the Army edged a 3-2 win over the RAF which meant the Army-Navy clash would decide the title.

It began as the Army wished... and the Navy feared. Half-way through the first half Olympian Guy Fordham had rattled in two from open play and for a short time the Navy looked to be sinking.

Enter stage left Richard Jenkin again to crack in the prayed-for reply for 2-1.

Substitute Clark of the Gunners



● The RN's player of the tournament, S/Lt Richard Jenkin, gives the Army the run around in the thrilling draw with the soldiers which ensured the RN lifted the Inter-Services' title

Picture: Lt Col Charles Jackman

had only been on the pitch for 13 minutes when he made it 3-1 right on half-time for the Army.

After the restart Jenkin scored the only converted short corner of the match to keep RN hopes alive, but REME's Dave Thomas quickly restored the soldiers' two-goal advantage for 4-2 on 46 minutes. Navy hearts were in Navy mouths; we needed to draw level and fast!

Wonder of wonders, a marvellous two-minute burst saw just that. First Capt Matt McNally RM (Albion) and then POAEA Mark Stanton (still of the Harrier Force) levelled the scores deservedly.

And then an Army forward drove past and through three awful Navy tackles. With only Warriner to beat the Army man picked his spot and propelled the ball past the hapless keeper in the Navy goal. Hearts sank, but what's this? The whistle's gone – before it crossed the line! To the soldiers' utter chagrin the umpire Mark Everard had blown at the final bad tackle – before the ball had entered the Navy net.

He knew. The 22 players knew and about 500 people in the stand knew that the poor chap had got it wrong and he could have – should have – delayed his whistle and could then allowed the goal.

Instead, a penalty stroke had to be taken... and when Micky Warriner saved it, the grandstand erupted and your correspondent swears the gods were sitting wearing navy blue in the back row of the VIP seats in the centre stand.

They were still sat there when, fittingly – it could not have been anyone else in this most splendid of fairy-tales – former skipper and Welsh International Danny Makaruk had the final Navy say, scoring with eight minutes left for a 5-4 Navy lead. Delirium reigned! Was there a hint of Navy relief sitting back to hold their lead? Probably, because the Army's Chris Lane, yet another fighting Gunner, not to be outdone, scored from open play with one minute left on the clock to end an enthralling match 5-5.

But for the umpire's decision, the Army, who still had their legs – incredibly – would have won 6-5 and with it the Inter-Services competition.

As it was, 5-5 was enough for the RN to take the title on goals for; they do not get much closer than this.

Meanwhile the RN U23 were also doing the Navy proud on the next pitch...

The Navy took on the RAF on the first afternoon and their confident play soon resulted in a fifth-minute opener from Navy pilot S/Lt Richard Green.

New cap Luke Dalton, making his Inter-Services debut, cracked in another on 15 minutes and the RN started stroking it around – maybe with a bit too much confidence.

The RAF's Luke Beddoes quite brilliantly scored from open play for 2-1 to bring the Light Blues back into it but Green's undoubted class saw him bury a penalty corner for 3-1 to the Navy just before half time.

RAF pressure briefly won the day when an RAF forward wriggled and jiggled his way through the assembled RN ranks to win a penalty corner for Martin Sully to close the scoreline to 3-2 with 7 minutes left.

Attack being the best form of defence the Navy took the game to the now-rejuvenated RAF to hang on for a win.

Things looked a wee bit ominous for the Senior Service when, in the early match next day, the Army U23s walloped the airmen 8-2.

But as it turned out, the RN well and truly 'did' the Army, 5 – 2.

AB Liam Pickford (Liverpool) opened the scoring on five minutes and the game remained 50-50 until Tognarelli converted a penalty corner with ten minutes left in the first half.

Five minutes into the second period Mne Jim Ewing broke the deadlock to give the RN a 2-1 lead, followed 60 seconds later by S/Lt Nick Tate (Collingwood), and three minutes afterwards by Mne Kyle Pinnock from a short corner.

Still 26 minutes to go with a 4-goal lead for the Navy, manager Lt Cdr Lee McEvoy must have been chuffed to little mintballs with the effects of his half-time talk. Truly the stuff of dreams.

The Army's magnificent captain, Vincent, got on the score sheet but the soldiers' lights were flickering now and it was left to Ewing to cement the victory with his second, the Navy's fifth. Trophy guaranteed.

Army inflict double defeat

THE Army ran in seven good tries against the RN in front of nearly 63,000 spectators at Twickenham, snatching back rugby union's Babcock Trophy won so dramatically by the Senior Service 12 months ago.

But for the opening few minutes it looked like the Navy would hold on to the most coveted trophy in Forces sport watched by a record crowd at the home of rugby union...

The soldiers started cautiously, gave away a penalty and then allowed the Navy a pretty soft try. Ten points up and things were looking promising...

But then Apo Satala ran, twisted and swatted blue shirts away to cross in the corner before Jack Prasad ran a full 50m for the best individual try seen at Twickenham for decades.

A show on the outside, a jink and shrug combined with pure genius and he was off to the posts escorted by a flotilla of blue jerseys – to no avail. Ceri Cummings converted to give the Army a 12-10 lead at the interval.

The second half saw the Senior Service treated to an exhibition of 'total rugby' from their foe: as the Army surged forward in numbers the matelots were left clutching at straws.

No-one laid a finger on Ben Seru as he went around to the posts. Cummings converted.

Prasad tied England 7s international Greg Barden in knots while No.6 Ifereimi Boladau led the soldiers on successive rampages deep into Navy territory.

Seru notched up his hat trick and Satala bagged a second. The final flourish came when Gus Qasevakatini flew down the left for a most spectacular finish.

It was a signed, sealed and delivered victory and the Red sections of the record crowd roared their delight at the 44-10 triumph.

And it wasn't the sole Army victory over the RN/RM...

In the veterans' clash, the Mariners faced the Masters in front of a slightly smaller crowd (some 4,000 souls).

The opening ten minutes were full of incident with the RN driving into the Army half, putting them under pressure and leading to the first of four sin bins throughout the game, allowing Lt Paul Clark (Fleet Education) to give the Mariners a 3-0 lead.

The first Army foray into Mariner territory was handled well with good defence from a motivated and aggressive Mariner pack, and safe hands under the high ball from Lt Jo Ainsley (HMS Sultan).

A speculative kick through from the Army stand-off bounced cruelly for the Mariner defence and allowed a simple touch down to give the Army a 7-3 lead.

The Mariners came back strongly with a solid scrum performance and driving runs from Sgt Lee Norris (Chicksands) and RN man of the match PO Justin Doney (820 NAS).

A quick ball emerged from the back of a ruck and gave WO2 Albert Hall (HMS Chatham) the best scoring opportunity of the match but he was well tackled into touch by a robust Army defence.

The Army, however were deemed to have been drawn offside allowing Clark to close the score to 7-6 to the soldiers.

The game intensity was raised several notches with both teams applying pressure but, again, a costly mistake by the Mariner defence allowed the simplest of run ins by the Army wing after a kick through and pick up giving the troops a 14-6 lead.

The second half saw the Masters begin to take advantage of momentum and belief, which the Mariners seemed to lack.

Continued on page 43

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